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# Farina's Got Balls

Adelaide City's Ante Kovacevic (left) seen here tussling with Marconi's international striker, Archie Thompson at the Hindmarsh Stadium, in Adelaide last Friday night.

**By John Economos**

**Despite his relatively tender age of having seen just 36 Summers, and yet being installed as our national manager, Frank Farina last week publicly displayed that although he understandably may lack senior international managerial experience, he certainly doesn't lack courage.**

In fact Farina proved that he's got real balls when he defied expert opinion, (if not anticipation), to steam ahead and select two players, considered highly unlikely, to make Farina's 20 man Australian World Cup squad.

The two players in question were lethal goalscorers, Damian Mori and Con Boutsianis.

It was almost certainly expected that Farina would not consider Mori for national selection following the Perth Glory striker's scathing public attack on Australia's coach, giving selection-preference to the Euro-based, over the domestic players.

Frank Farina: Young, but already a courageous national manager.

Farina didn't bat an eye lid to Mori's attack and went ahead to include him in his World Cup squad.

Even more astounding was the case of Boutsianis, (arguably the best hitter of a dead ball in Australia).

Because of Boutsianis' highly publicised brush with the Law two years ago, and recently very much revived in the media on a second hearing, Farina again was expected to bypass this lethal left-footed player.

This also highly gifted player was facing sentencing yesterday, (Monday), in the Melbourne County Court.

Farina last night stated to ABSW: "My criteria has always been not to judge over the personal life of a player, but purely over his playing ability.

"I don't have an ego, but I do have a job to get Australia to the World Cup.

"And on top of all this, I don't hold grudges," Farina ended.

Yet despite all this surrounding adversity, and well prior to the Judge's findings, Farina brazenly brushed all this aside and still steamed ahead to draft Boutsianis into his Australian squad last week..

What guts.

Farina, ABSW whole heartedly salutes you.

By the way, Boutsianis only yesterday, (Monday), received from the Melbourne County Court a two year good behaviour bond, a fine of $20,000, plus a 'no conviction charge' to appear against his name.

The young Farina, by defying all odds, logic and popular opinion, still stubbornly went ahead and included both players in his national squad.

What in fact Farina proved by his unorthodox actions, was that he divorced set himself up publicly as being a judge, purely over a player's Soccer ability as opposed.

Farina early this morning, (Tuesday) flew out for Japan where FIFA is holding the Confederation Cup draw and will then fly back to Australia and go straight into the Australian training camp at Coffs Harbour on Wednesday.

Con Boutsianis: Selected by Farina.

Damian Mori: Selcted by Farina.

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# Andrew Marth replaces Vanis

**Melbourne Knights has appointed captain Andrew Marth as coach until the end of the current season.**

The move comes after Vlado Vanis stepped down as head coach. Vanis cited disappointment at the recent run of results for his decision.

"I have done the best I can with the boys," Vanis said.

"We were progressing well but the tide turned and the results of the last three games have been very disappointing.

"With the team still capable of making the final play-offs that are just around the corner I believe the best for the club would be for me to step down," he said.

Club president Harry Mrksa said it was paramount that the players, officials and staff focus on the remaining five games.

"We express our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Vlado for his services to the club, and regret his decision. It's important now to focus on making the finals — the most important part of the season," he said.

## Malaysia-bound Victorians

*Back row, left to right: Ernie Merrick (head coach), Aaron Healey (assistant coach), Brendan Beni, Evan Papadopoulos, Spase Dilevski, Steve Mitrovski, Fred Au, Christian Morales, Vito Ceniti, Serkan Okuz, Damien Ostrowski, Daniel Rocco (vice-captain), Anita Pedrana (Sports Science), Kate Aitchison (Physiotherapist).*
*Middle row: Kristian Sarkies, Michael Sham-Yuen, Ricky Chillico (captain), Manny Karas, Billy Celevski.*
*Front row: Frankie Lagana, Michael Popovski, Bobby Georgievski, Evan Karavitis, Ibraim Ibraimi, Sammy De Vito.* *Photo © Michael Gazzola*

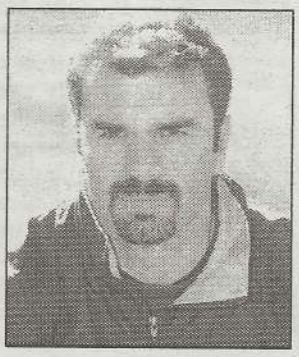
# JOEYS TUNE-UP WITH FINE WIN

***By Nick Guoth***

**The Joeys claimed a comfortable 5-2 win over the visiting Japanese Under 17 team in the second of their two warm-up friendlies leading to Wednesday night's World Cup playoff match, to be played in Canberra.**

The Joeys will meet either New Zealand or Vanuatu for the single Oceania place in the Finals which will be held in Trinidad and Tobago later this year.

"Tonight was an improvement on last Sunday", said Joeys' coach Ange Postecoglou. "We saw an improvement from the boys", following last Wednesday's game against the Japanese.



*Ange Postecoglou: Joeys head coach.*

On the tighter pitch, one which heavily suited the close-knit play of the Australians, the Japanese were rarely given a chance to trouble Nathan Coe's goal. The movement of the ball left their opponents just watching, and only for the breakdowns in the final third were the Australian's not more dominant.

The first goal came following a Japanese attack when at one end Yutaro Abe played a one-two with Hiroto Mogi to get in behind the Joey's defence. The low cross however was cleared from the six-yard box and sent down the left where Brett Holman played a give-and-go with Carl Valeri finding himself in the penalty area and sending his low shot past Atsushi Kimura.

Australia was trying out some different combinations in the backs and this allowed the Japanese to produce some chances, yet it was a clear mix-up between Rodney Madigan and Matthew Hunter which saw the two sprawled on the ground as Abe accelerated away feeding Mogi for a clinical finish to tie up the scores.

Japan came out much the hungrier at the beginning of the second half but were denied of a second equaliser through some excellent keeping from Coe.

A Kazumazu Takagi low cross was hit first time by Mogi only to be saved well by the spread-eagled Coe. Mogi had a shot a few minutes later which saw Coe pass the ball by his post for a corner.

Then at the other end a corner for the Joeys was taken by Massimo Murdocca on the left. It met a crowd of bodies and was bounced back towards goal from the shoulder of Kisho Yano. Terry Smith reacted first to change the ball's direction using his chest and giving the substitute keeper Nobuhiro Kato no chance.

With a quarter of an hour left Japan doubled their score. Kohei Kuda robbed Steven Baveas of the ball close to the Australian's goal and laid it off for Naoya Kikuchi to finish superbly.

The final goal came five minutes later when the old "route one" saw a long kick from Coe fall near the opposing penalty area. Takahito Fukuo tried to head the ball away but saw it fall invitingly to Engele who from within the penalty area easily lobbed the stranded Kato.

Whilst obviously happy with the result, Postecoglou sees there is still some work to do. He is further hoping that Sean Walsh may become available for the upcoming home and away clashes in the next few weeks.

# Cosmos grabs Belconnen goalie

***By Graham Cooke***

**Belconnen Blue Devils captain Anthony Giannasca received an unexpected recall to the National Soccer League last week — just matter of days after he had finished his NSW Premier League duties.**

Giannasca was getting ready for a winter in the ACT Premiership with Gungahlin Juventus when the call from Cosmos came through. He did not take much time to make up his mind. "Yes, I am still ambitious to play at the top level," the 31-year-old conceded. "I could not resist the challenge."

Giannasca could have signed for the Cosmos at the beginning of the season, but took what he described as the less-complicated option to play for the Blue Devils.

"I have a young family and a very demanding job, and a season of traveling all over Australia every second week did not seem so attractive then," he said.

"But now there's just six games left and a specific task to do.

"I am match fit, and although there is obviously a bit of a difference between the NSW Premier and NSL standards I believe I can make the transition very quickly."

Giannasca is almost certainly booked into the Cosmos goalkeeping spot for the remainder of the season after the club's two young 'keepers, Barney Smith and Angelo Konstantinou, made errors in consecutive games, costing the team a point in each case.

They will now receive attention from goalkeeping coach Paul Jones, who battled Giannasca for a place in the Canberra Metros NSW League line-up in the early 1990s.

They both hail from an era when ACT goalkeepers were plentiful and talented — Tony Franken, Chris Hummel, Steve Hoszowski, Peter Gunning and George Economopoulos were just some — Giannasca was reckoned to be among the very best.

He made his debut for Canberra in 1986 at the age of 15 years and nine months and from then on was a regular performer for the Metros, later Canberra Deakin, in the NSW competition.

In 1993, frustrated by Canberra's continuing absence from the NSL, he moved to West Adelaide returning to play in the latter part of the Cosmosí NSL debut season in 1995-96. After two further campaigns he left the club when it became clear he did not figure in coach Rale Rasic's long-term plans, playing in the ACT premiership first for Capital City Suns then Juventus until the Blue Devils came calling.

He does not discount an extended run in the NSL with the Cosmos if coach Mike Milovanovic gives him the opportunity.

"I feel very good and I am certainly not over the hill, so next season is a possibility," he said. "Bob Catlin is a prime example of a goalkeeper who can play at the top level well into his mature years."

Milovanovic said both Smith and Konstantinou were promising goalkeepers 'but they are just 22 years old'.

"The problem is they play in a position where, if an error is made, it stands out," he said. "I felt the need for additional strength in that position and hopefully Tony, with his extensive NSL experience, will add something to what is, overall, a very young team."

# NSW U/17 off to Italy

***By Mark Stavroulakis***

**Fifteen New South Wales Institute of Sports players (8 current and 7 from last year) have been selected to tour with the NSW side in the forthcoming Gradisca soccer tournament in Italy.**

Nine players from this squad also have been selected in the recent U17 Joeys squad who are all still camping in Canberra for the up and coming Oceania Qualifiers.

The Gradisca Tournament is considered the best Under-17 Tournament in the world. It is approved by FIFA, the world governing body of football, and has been running since 1986.

The tournament is of such a high standard that RAI Television broadcasts the semi-finals and the final Live on Italian television.

Amongst the competitors this year are seven national teams from Austria, Colombia, Iran, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Slovenia and USA. Some of the major club teams participating are Ajax (Holland), Juventus (Italy), Gremio (Brazil), Atletico Bilbao (Spain), Colo Colo (Chile), Lazio (Italy), Atlas (Mexico), and Inter Milan (Italy).

NSWIS Head Coach Kelly Cross will be travelling as Head Coach of the team, which contains nine current Australian Under-17 Internationals. 'This competition is virtually a World Cup', said Cross, who was Assistant Coach of Australia's Under-17 Team that reached the World Cup Final in 1999.

"We'll be up against many of the best players in the world in this age group. I believe it is further proof of the good work carried out here at the New South Wales Institute of Sport that there are 15 NSWIS boys involved."

Europe, South America, Central America, Africa and Oceania will be represented at Gradisca making it the biggest age-group tournament of its kind.

New South Wales have been drawn against Bologna (Italy), Atletico Bilbao (Spain) and the Slovenian National Team, with the first game scheduled on April 25th.

*Brett Holman*

## THE FULL SQUAD

| | |
|---|---|
| Phil Weston | Steven Baveas *(Joey)* |
| Adam Federici | Chris Cop |
| Paul Cotte | Stefan Del Zio |
| Brett Studman *(Joey)* | Jobe Wheelhouse |
| Chris Tadrosse | Michael Brown *(Joey)* |
| Dominic Hudap | Brett Holman *(Joey)* |
| Jacob Timpano | Matthew Engele *(Joey)* |
| Alex Wilkinson *(Joey)* | Carl Valeri *(Joey)* |
| Nick Stavroulakis *(Joey)* | Sean Walsh *(Joey)* |

Bert van Bedaf

# Vanis vanishes on Mrksa's demand

**By Bert van Bedaf**

**Who would sack a coach who is securing your team a place in the finals? The bewildering sacking of Vlado Vanis as coach of the Melbourne Knights has been a season in the making.**

It is no secret that club president Harry Mrksa was not a huge fan of Vanis and last Tuesday after training Msrksa told the players Vanis had left the club.

He'd finally sacked the coach that had lifted the Knights from last two seasons ago to fifth place and a good chance of playing in the finals for the first time since 1997.

with Vanis also goes the rest of the coaching staff, assistant coach Mark Talajic and specialist (goal keeping) coach Mustafa Pestalec. There will be a clean slate in the politically charged Knights camp.

Obviously Vanis is bitterly disappointed he couldn't finish a job he began with so much commitment 18 months ago, with modest playing material, much of which he signed up himself after a serious clean-out, and a paltry budget.

"We were last when I came in and now we're nearly in the finals. We can definitely finish in sixth or fifth spot," Vanis said.

"I've done the best I can. I brought in five players from the Victorian league and we made a good team," he said.

That's why it is particularly galling he had to walk away last Tuesday without being able to say goodbye to the players.

"We finished training and I went home. I didn't talk to the players (about his sacking). Harry Mrska talked to the players," Vanis said.

Vanis has been under pressure from the start. The knives appeared for the first time in round three, when the Knights lost 3-0 to Canberra. It was a game the Knights were expected to win for their third victory on the trot.

Then came two more losses to Wollongong and South Melbourne before Vanis saved his bacon with a 4-0 win over Sydney United.

But the roller-coaster ride continued. There was a loss to Sydney Olympic, a win over Eastern Pride, a draw with the Football Kingz. The Knights were inconsistent, unpredictable, which may largely be attributed to the youthfulness and inexperience of the side, comprising more than a handful of Victorian Premier League players, Vanis elevated to NSL material.

At one stage, there was the bizarre spectacle of Vanis being called to Msrka waiting in his car in the Knights carpark, with the media waiting to hear the verdict. When Vanis emerged, he grinned and said, "I've still got a job. Mrska has assured me of his support."

Nevertheless, despite setbacks, the Knights climbed the ladder and when old boys Andrew Marth, Lubo Lapsansky and Steve Horvat returned from collapsed Carlton, the team became vastly more experienced and, after a settling in period, it consolidated a spot in the top six.

Its erratic behavior, however, did not quite leave the Jekyll and Hyde side. It lost 5-2 one week to Wollongong and thumped South Melbourne 4-0 at home the following week.

Three matches, however, may have significantly contributed to Vanis' downfall. They were the 3-2 home defeat to Sydney Olympic (should have been a draw), the 2-2 draws away to bottom side Eastern Pride and last week with New Zealand's Football Kingz (both should have been wins).

Vanis accrued only two points for a possible nine (or seven) in the last three matches, a point he acknowledged after the Kingz match.

"We've been disappointing in the last few games," he said, while Knights general manager Robert Hrzic acknowledged what sealed Vanis' fate. "We were disappointed with the results from the past three matches," Hrzic said.

It was also a result that displeased the Knights fans. So much so they abused striker Joel Porter, who missed a realistic chance against the Kingz, and Vanis. Although Vanis denied it, the abuse, in the Croatian language, was of a highly personal and obscene nature, which became apparent when someone fluent in Croatian translated the abuse in English.

Vlado Vanis: Knights' ex- coach

"There were a few hooligans who had a go at Joel (Porter) and me. They were yelling. But I would not call them supporters of the club," Vanis said.

The arrival of strongman Mrksa as president has brought back an ambience to the club that belonged to past practices. It went virtually unnoticed, but last year's president Tony Karlusic, who is still on the board, quietly vacated his spot to make room for the older guard.

The return of Andrew Marth, a twice grand-final winner during the Knights greatest era (they won the title in 1995 and 1996 with captain Marth scoring in each final). also destabilised Vanis' position. Talk quickly did the rounds that Marth would succeed Vanis, that Marth would be the new coach soon and so on.

Now it has happened and player-coach Marth marshalled his troops to a 4-1 victory away to the Northern Spirit last Friday night.

But he has already indicated he will only see out the season in his new role and doesn't want the coaching job full time next season. Marth holds an executive position with a company outside soccer and wisely banks his future on his full time job.

"It's to the end of the season and I don't know, if I could do it full time. My main priority is work," said Marth, who had successful caretaker coaching jobs in the VPLeague with St Albans and Green Gully.

Coaching the Knights is as diabolical as being the King's advisor - and especially for club legends. Vanis followed the Knights' most favorite son Joe Biskic, who was dumped after a string of poor results early last season.

The Knights haven't thought further ahead than making the finals and doing well this season. But already, the name of Ian Dobson is circulating as its coach next season.

He is Victoria's most successful coach, having coached VPL clubs Altona Magic and Green Gully to successive premierships and the Knights to their second national championship in 1996. The coach is dead; long live the coach.

# Knights lose cash to TV telecast

**By Bert van Bedaf**

**Melbourne Knights manager Robert Hrzic claimed live telecast of the national soccer league match against New Zealand's Football Kingz last Sunday week had cost the club thousands of dollars in lost revenue.**

The official crowd number reached just over the season's average of 5,000, but Hrzic said it included a large slice of non-paying public because of Soccer Australia's promotion of the children's Rooball program, which had inflated the attendance figure.

"We registered a 5,000 crowd (5216 was the precise figure), but that would have included a lot of freebies because of the Rooball promotion. We expected a bigger paying crowd. Definitely there were absentees; people who decided to stay away to watch the game at home. Live football (on television) always costs us," Hrzic said.

Last season there were two live telecasts at the Knights, this season they're into their fifth, Hrzic said.

The Knights match against the Kiwis, which ended in a 2-2 draw and cost coach Vlado Vanis his job, was

telecast live on Channel Seven's pay-tv station C7 (Optus), from 6pm.

Hrzic supports live telecasts of matches but suggests Seven should do what it does with Australian Rules football and not show Melbourne games live in the metropolitan area.

Aussie rules football games played in Melbourne are shown only in country regions, while the city receives an alternative broadcast. People who want to watch the game live have the choice of travelling 100km outside the metropolis or attend the match.

"Live games are fantastic. We welcome the broadcast of our interstate matches because it attracts supporters to the club who can watch the game on the large screen in our social club," Hrzic said.

"But televising home matches live takes away from the crowd. When 100 people stay away we lose $1400 in tickets. We easily would have lost up to 1500 spectators last Sunday. It also has a trickle effect on the catering and bar revenues. People who otherwise would have come might also have spent another $10 on food and a few drinks," he said.

South Melbourne general manager Damian Phillips gave a qualified nod to Hrzic's observations.

"It can have an effect. There are people who will stay at home and therefore it has a bit of a bearing (on the attendance), no doubt about it.

But I don't think it has an overwhelming bearing on the crowd," Phillips said.

"The ideal situation would be not to show games live in the state the match is played in," he added.

## Australia's 20-man World Cup Squad

| NAME | CLUB |
|---|---|
| John Aloisi | Coventry (England) |
| Clint Bolton | Sydney Olympic |
| Con Boutsianis | South Melbourne |
| Scott Chipperfield | Wollongong Wolves |
| Simon Colosimo | South Melbourne |
| Steve Corica | Sanfrecce Hiroshima(Japan) |
| Fausto De Amicis | South Melbourne |
| Hayden Foxe | West Ham(England) |
| Steve Horvat | Melbourne Knights |
| Scott Miller | Perth Glory |
| Craig Moore | Rangers (Scotland) |
| Damian Mori | Perth Glory |
| Kevin Muscat | Wolverhampton (England) |
| Michael Petkovic | South Melbourne |
| Tony Popovic | Sanfrecce Hiroshima(Japan) |
| Archie Thompson | Marconi Stallions |
| Tony Vidmar | Rangers(Scotland) |
| Aurelio Vidmar | Adelaide City |
| Lindsay Wilson | Sydney Olympic |
| David Zdrilic | Unterhaching(Germany) |

The full draws for the Oceania Group 1 World Cup qualifying games are:

**April 7** ..... Samoa v Tonga
..... Fiji v American Samoa
..... Bye - Australia
**April 9** ..... Tonga v Australia
..... American Samoa v Samoa
..... Bye - Fiji
**April 11** ..... Samoa v Fiji
..... Australia v American Samoa
..... Bye - Tonga
**April 14** ..... Fiji v Australia
..... American Samoa v Tonga
..... Bye - Samoa
**April 16** ..... Australia v Samoa
..... Tonga v Fiji
..... Bye - American Samoa

*• The winner of the Group 1 will go on to meet the winner of Group 2, in a two-legged play-off in June.*

# Angie axes 4 Joeys

**National Youth Coach Ange Postecoglou has made the difficult decision of cutting four players from his squad of 24, as the LG Joeys prepare for the first leg of their final elimination play-off for the FIFA Under-17 World Championship, in Canberra on Wednesday night.**

Australia's opponent, New Zealand, was finally determined on Friday afternoon at the conclusion of Group 2 Oceania Qualifiers in Vanuatu.

Having evaluated the LG Joeys squad over the last two weeks in camp, including friendlies in which Australia drew and beat the Japanese Under-17 team, Postecoglou has omitted defenders Rodney Madigan (Marconi) and Adam Van Dommele (SASI), and midfielders Ben Stevens (QAS) and Mario Karlovic (Adelaide City) from the squad which will meet New Zealand.

"It was a hard choice, but in the end I had to cut four from the squad, and the decision has now been made," said Postecoglou from Canberra.

"All of the boys played their part in the build up to Wednesday's game, and with the World Championship still six months away, there will be plenty of opportunities for them to come back in.

"Now that decision has been dealt with, we're obviously putting full concentration on the first leg of the qualifier.

Details of the Play-off match are as follows:

**DATE:** Wednesday 4th April 2001
**WHAT:** AUSTRALIA UNDER-17s Vs NEW ZEALAND UNDER-17s
**FIRST LEG** - Final Qualifier - Oceania Football Confederation for FIFA Under-17 World Championship (to be held in Trinidad & Tobago, Sept 2001)
**WHERE:** West Belconnen Leagues Club, Hardwick Crescent, Kippax (Canberra).

# Glory, SAWA feud over $.02m fees

**By Richard Kreider**

**West Australia's National Soccer League club Perth Glory have refused to hand over a $20,000 re-afilliation fee to the states governing body, Soccer Administration of Western Australia (SAWA), despite the mounting threat of losing competition points if they donít pay up; saying it is far too high compared to what is paid by the other SAWA affiliates.**

SAWA consist of three voting stakeholders, the Junior Soccer Association, the WA Amateur and Social Soccer Association and the State League clubs ñ all of whom pay an affiliation charge of $10,000.

The SAWA affiliates consists of the Ladies Soccer Association, the Refereeís and Coaches bodies and Perth Glory.

Glory president Nick Tana is the SAWA representative for all four bodies. All have a seat on the SAWA Board but donít have a say on constitutional matters. Apart from Glory, the other three bodies pay a fee ranging between $400 and $500.

"$20,000 is virtually petty cash (to the club) when you consider the substantial funds that are generated within the industry," said SAWA president and Glory co-owner Paul Afkos on Perth television last Sunday.

Bernd Stange, Glory coach.

Tana, however, said he is prepared to take SAWA to court if required to resolve the matter.

"As far am I am concerned it is always a position of last resort, but at the end of the day if that is what is needed to resolve it well, unfortunately that's where it will go," said Tana also on Perth TV.

"I am totally bamboozled by Mr Tanaís stance. There is no commercial rationale or logic behind this, since there are some severe ramnifications that Soccer Australia can impose," Afkos said although Soccer Australia are believed to have said the issue is simply one that should be decided by the two fighting factions until one actually comes forward to seek advice.

Any threat of the Glory being banned from the NSL competition or at least points being deducted appears to be blown all out of proportion, according to Tana. "I don't think (Soccer Australia) will ever entertain it," he said.

# The Good Oil ... The Good Oil ...

By John Economos

THE 'FRENCH CONNECTION' was spotted at Belmore Sports Ground last Sunday.

No, it wasn't Hollywood's Gene Hackman.

Sydney Olympic's name over the past 10 days or so has been linked to Club side, A.S. Monaco, the crack outfit in the French first division.

It's understood that Olympic has already had a couple of serious meetings with people from France.

Olympic underlined to 'Good Oil' last night, that although there is in fact a 'French connection' pending, it will NOT involve a 'buy-out' or even a 'buy-in', by a French syndicate.

The anonymous French syndicate that's highly interested in getting involved with Sydney Olympic, in reality is not Monaco directly, but a group of bankers that bankroll A.S. Monaco as well as Bordeaux.

The French bankers sent out one of their leading consultants to Sydney last week and he actually was present last Sunday at the Belmore Sports Ground.

The French financial consultant, having watched a pathetic performance in the first session where the Sydney side trailed 0-1, was highly elated to see Olympic make a dramatic and spectacular second half come back from the dead, to crush the Canberra Cosmos 3-1.

❑❑❑❑

MICKEY HICKMAN, the Northern Spirit's caretaker coach following the departure of Graham Arnold two months back, was late last week offered a two year contract by the Club's majority owners, Glasgow Rangers to remain with the Club.

With such security now under his belt, 'Hickey' already has started to look around for some decent, new 'cattle' to sign up.

With the almost certain loss of gangling striker Ben Burgess who is likely to return to his English club Blackburn Rovers, priority on 'Hickey's' list is at least two quality strikers to replace him plus an experienced central defender.

Ante Juric: Olympic's captain and dynamic sweeper.

Hickman's two year contract abruptly extinguished recent wild speculative Sydney rumours that former Rangers' defender, and former Carlton coach Stuart Munro, would come in as the Spirit's new coach for next season.

Mickey Hickman: Signed up for another two years by the Spirit.

❑❑❑❑

NOW that Newcastle United's hierarchy has made it clear that incumbent coach Lee Sterrey will not be retained for next season, speculation has run rife as to who will be drafted in as the Novocastrians' new boss.

Former St George player and former national coach of Tahiti, Leon Gardikiotis' name has been banded around as being Sterrey's likely successor.

The Spirit's English import Ian Crook as well as former Wollongong Wolves' coach Nick Theodorakopoulos have had their names tossed into the Newcastle hat.

Lee Sterrey: Newcastle United's outgoing coach.

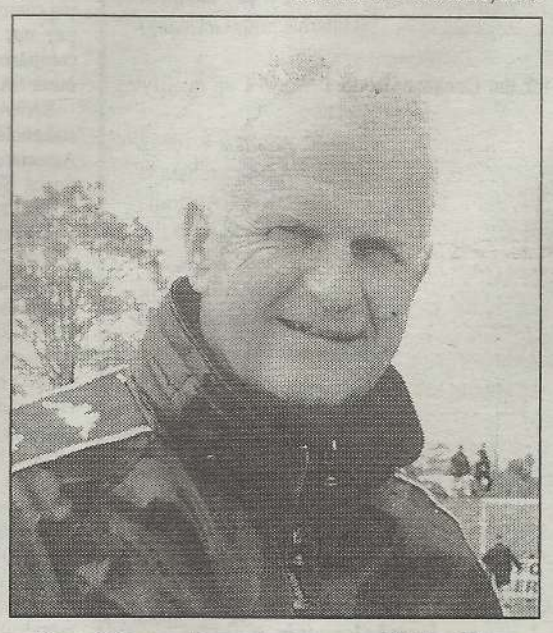
But late last week, startling rumours trickled out in Sydney that Gardikiotis was also seeking a position on the coaching staff at Liverpool, (as in at Anfield), would you believe.

❑❑❑❑

SPEAKING of coaching changes for next season, it's now almost official that the Perth Glory and Bernd Stange will be parting company at the end of this season.

Rumours flying around Western Australia has it that Stange's current assistant coach, Mitch d'Avray, will be handed the keys to 'drive the team' and there's speculation that the former African will have the Spirit's Ian Crook in the 'navigator's seat.'

❑❑❑❑



Bernd Stange: To part company with the Glory.

GOALKEEEPER BOJO JEVDJEVIC, was late last week signed up by Sydney Olympic.

The 29 year old custodian who over the past four seasons played 69 games with the Eastern Pride, signed with Olympic until the end of this season.

Bob Jevdjevic: Custodian signs for Olympic.

❑❑❑❑

SBS-TV next Monday night, (April 9th), will screen a two hour Special highlights package of both F.A. Cup semi-finals between Wycombe Wanderers (Division 2) and Liverpool, plus the clash between the two big London sides, Arsenal vs Tottenham Hotspurs.

The first match of the evening to be screened will be the Arsenal vs Spurs battle at 11.35 am, with the Liverpool vs Wycombe Wanders being screened immediately after at 12.35am, (early Tuesday morning that is).

Yet again the Super Soccer Channel, (SBS), has secured the exclusive, free-to-air rights, for the F.A.Cup Final, covered Live on Saturday May 12th, direct from the Millennium Stadium, Cardiff, Wales.

The telecast will commence from 10.30pm a.e.s.t.

Heading the SBS panel on F.A. Cup Final night again will be SBS' Head of Sport, Les Murray with Soccer analyst John Warren plus special guests.

The four remaining sides in the F.A. Cup that include Liverpool and Wycombe Wanderers, are the two London giants, Arsenal and Tottenham Hotspurs.

Michael Owen: Liverpool's ace England World Cup striker.

❑❑❑❑

SYDNEY OLYMPIC's home match on Anzac Day against Newcastle United at the Belmore Sports Ground will kick off at 5pm, and NOT at 6.30pm.

The preceding Youth League match will start at 2.30pm.

❑❑❑❑

AT recent Soccer club function, an auction was staged that yielded some strange dividends.

Going under the hammer was a 'club Soccer shirt' that ultimately was banged out at a favourable $400.

But then a West Tigers Rugby League shirt went up for bidding and it brought in $600.

An R.L. shirt bringing in more than a Soccer shirt?

And that at as Soccer function?

Why was this so?

Later the same evening, some Soccer sanity was salvaged, thank God, as an Australian Olympics 2000 autographed Soccer shirt yielded $1,200.

❑❑❑❑

WHICH coach currently involved in the NSL could be soon dumping his Club?

Frank Farina: Special guest at Olympic's Youth Dinner.

The coach in question has just received a most tempting, (if not prestigious), offer to fly to Africa and take over the national team of the Ivory Coast.

❑❑❑❑

OLYMPIC's Youth team which will go on tour of Malaysia at the end of next month, staged a most successful 'Fund Raising Dinner' last Saturday night.

Special guests at this function were current Australian World Cup coach Frank Farina plus former Australian Youth team coach, Les Schienflug.

As is the case with most 'Fund-raising' events, after dinner, an auction was staged with an array of Soccer memorabilia up for grabs.

Topping all bids for a team-autographed shirt of Olympiakos, the Champions of the Greek first division, was made by Sydney Olympic's former goalkeeper, Herc Karacostas.

Karacostas was the back-up 'keeper to Gary Meier at Olympic in the late 70s and early 80s.

An emotional Herc with highly spirited bidding, 'came well off his line' and nailed the Soccer shirt with an outstanding bid of $2,000.

Just before the Olympiakos shirt was presented to a hilariously happy Herc, a supporter sitting at an opposite table and from a rival Greek first division club, almost caused a certain riot at the dinner.

He stood up and bellowed to the auctioneer that he would offer no less than $4,000 if the Olympiakos shirt was burnt right there and then.

It was an offer almost too good to refuse, despite that it would have rocketted the balances of the fund-raising.

❑❑❑❑

Damon Collina: Olympic's energetic central marker.

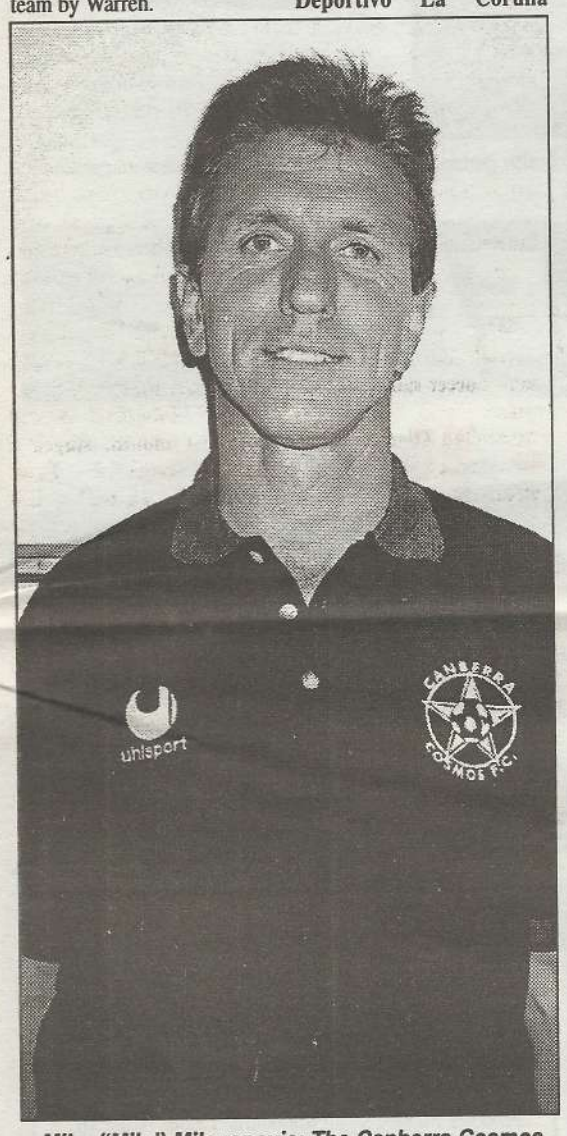
# The Good Oil ... The Good Oil

By John Economos

MIKE MILOVANOVIC, the Canberra Cosmos coach, although having reservations as to Canberra's survival in next season's reduced National League format, is highly enthusiastic about some of his young talent that he's upgraded into his first team.

'Milo' made his debut in the NSL with Canberra City back in 1978, as an 18 year old attacking left fullback under the then coach John Warren.

That same year another two 18 year olds were promoted into Canberra's first team by Warren.



*Mike ('Milo') Milovanovic: The Canberra Cosmos coach.*

One was right fullback Danny Moulis, (Canberra's current president), and the other was midfielder Stevie Hogg.

The two young strapping defenders, (Moulis and Milovanovic), the very next year went on to represent Australia at the second World Youth Championships Finals staged in Paraguay under the then national coach, Rudi Gutendorf.

"I'm very excited about some of our young talent that I have in the Canberra squad," 'Milo' told 'Good Oil'.

"The average age of my team is only 22 years.

"Paul Ivanic is 18 so is Stephen Kemp and Daniel Aliffi has just turned 19.

"Against Sydney Olympic last Sunday, which I rate as one of the best sides in the League, our young players did very well.

"All they now need is experience," ended 'Milo'.

As a player, Milovanovic who also had an attacking flair as a defender, later left Canberra to play with Blacktown City then finished his NSL career with Brisbane City in 1985.

□□□□

**SBS this Thursday night will screen a full replay direct from Elland Road of the first quarter final clash in the Champions' League between Leeds United and Deportivo La Coruna (Spain).**

**The telecast kicks off at 10.30 pm.**

**The two sides have never met in a European competition.**

**Australia's powerful World Cup star striker, Mark Viduka, is certain to cause the Spanish Champions some headaches.**

**At this stage, three Spanish and three English sides remain in the Champions' League.**

**SBS will transmit the Final, Live on from Italy's San Siro Stadium in Milan on Thursday, May 24th at 4.15 am (a.e.s.t.).**

□□□□

LINDSAY WILSON, Sydney Olympic's penetrating right wingback, continued showing his top form last Sunday against the Canberra Cosmos at Belmore Sports Ground.

His second half slashing display would have pleased national coach Frank Farina and continue to justify his first time selection in the Australian squad to do battle next week in the Oceania World Cup qualifiers.

Australia's first qualifier in Group One to be played in Coffs Harbour, is against Tonga at 5.30pm.

Wilson's level of confidence this season has dramatically risen as he majestically finds himself with the ability to glide past defenders with great ease down his right flank.

Adding to his worth, is Wilson's vastly improved vision which enables him to constantly switch Olympic's attacks with an array of quality crosses that actually find their intended targets.

Is it possible that we may have in two or three years time a mini-David Beckham in the making?

□□□□

**Last week rumours broke out that American Samoa, due to play Australia tomorrow week, (Wednesday April 11th), in a World Cup qualifier, may not even be able to turn up at Coffs Harbour-venue of the Oceania tournament qualifiers.**

**It was believed that American Samoa has experienced problems in assembling some type of decent squad to be able to compete.**

**Ranked last on FIFA's world list, (203 rd), the tiny Pacific nation would be liable to a hefty fine of some $47,000 issued by the world Football governing body.**

**A $47,000 fine?**

**How ridiculous.**

**Where on Earth would this tiny island nation find that kind of 'freight' when already it's struggling for finances to buy boots for its players.**

**Yesterday, assurances were most thankfully made to the Oceania tournament officials that the American Samoa team would in fact make it to the crease at Coffs Harbour by the time the tournament kicks off this Saturday.**

**American Samoa's first opponent on Saturday is against the dark horses of the tournament, Fiji, with the match kicking off at 8 pm.**

**Australia has a bye on Saturday.**

*Lindsay Wilson: Olympic's in form right wingback, in full action last Sunday at the Belmore Sports Ground, seen here shielding the ball from a Canberra opponent. Olympic won 3-1.*

*Mark Viduka: To take on the Spaniards.*

## GLORY STUMBLES IN LOCAL FRIENDLY

**By Richard Kreider**

**Almost 4,000 Perth Glory fans were able to get another look at their team last Friday night when they played Fremantle City at Fremantle Oval in a friendly clash, which took the place of the cancelled NSL Carlton fixture.**

But the less than full strength side was given a rude shock when it went down 3-2 to the State League side, but not before enjoying what appeared to be a comfortable 2-0 lead.

A late red card to Glory defender PJ Roberts certainly wouldnít have helped, but the club that has been making moves to become part of the NSL had already taken a 3-2 advantage.

*PJ Roberts: Sent off against Fremantle.*

The evening had begun on the wrong foot even before a ball had even been kicked, with the spectators being charged an entrance fee when after early debate between clubs had reportedly agreed on just a voluntary donation.

Perth striker Nick Mrdja opened the scoring after six minutes and another of the latest signings in Todd Harnwell, increased the score 14 minutes later on.

The home made it 2-1 after almost an hours play through ex-Glory midfielder Paul McVittie before William Pryce, brother of Glory defender Shane Pryce, levelled the score directly from a quality 70th minute free-kick.

Another former Glory player, Dale Wingell, had a penalty saved by Tomi Tomich in the first-half but the flank runner made amends late in the second, from another spot-kick to clinch a surprise City win.

# Nathan Coe: The Man with the Golden Gloves

**By Mark Stavroulakis**

**The 16-year-old Nathan Coe is currently living it up as a Soccer player of the moment.**

Not only is this young lad at the AIS, but he's also been in camp for three weeks now with the U17 Joeys squad, training and preparing for the up and coming World Cup qualifier against New Zealand.

Young Nathan started off his career at Brisbane first division club Mount Gravette, where he spent five solid seasons there. "Mount Gravette was a stepping stone towards my career as a footballer. It was at this club I was noticed for the QAS side," said the young goalkeeper.

As a fifteen year old, young 'Coey' was chosen to represent the QAS in the National Youth League, something of which was a huge step for this young but very talented keeper.

"Making the move to the QAS was great as I learned so many new things there. Coach Garry Phillips was really helpful and through his guidance, we learned how to be professionals. There is some good talent up at Queensland, and the QAS is a great stable for so many good young talents in that state," said the young Queenslander.

The National Identification Tournament was the next achievement young 'Coey' took part in, representing Queensland in the 2000 National titles in Sydney. "It was a huge experience playing for my state as I felt really proud being apart of such a great squad. We didn't expect too much from this tournament, but ended up winning the finals against NSW one-nil something of which I will never forget. It was unbelievable, the experience was awesome and winning it was just an extra-added bonus.

Also playing against the best Under 16 year olds in Australia was another big thrill for myself," said the victorious keeper.

The Brisbane Strikers expressed their interest in Nathan and signed him up on a professional contract making it clear that he was one for the future up at Ballymore.

"I was training with the Strikers three times a week and then a day before match day I trained with the QAS. It's sought of like a loan deal with the QAS, it helps me get match fit. I've sat quite a few times on the Strikers bench, hoping one day my chance would come to play against the big

*Youth Profile*

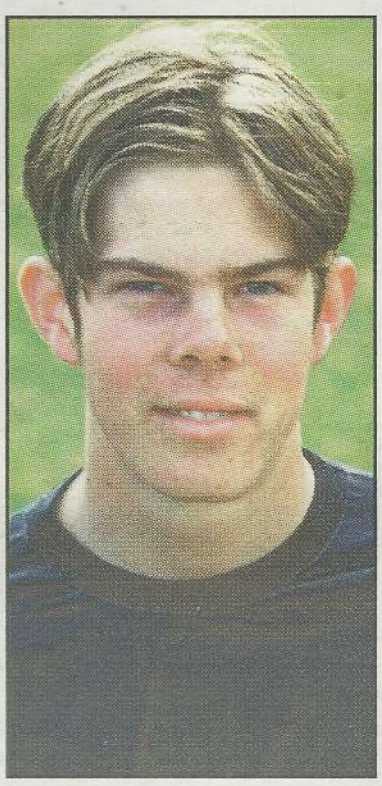
boys," said the determined youngster.

In early February this year, Nathan signed a year's scholarship with the famous AIS, where he'd stay there for the year and nurture his skills more in becoming an even better keeper. "The move to the AIS has been great so far as the professionalism involved at the place is second to none. We train everyday, the facilities are at our doorstep, its really a great place to be apart of," said the AIS goalkeeper.

Achieving things at a huge level have only taken the extra step forward for young Coe as he was recently selected in the U17 Joeys squad.

"It was the biggest honor anyone can have representing your country. It came through myself playing well for the QAS, I was then invited to a camp and from then on impressed the coaches and was selected for the squad. The qualifiers in Samoa were great.

I played two of the four games, even though it wasn't the best competition, it



*Nathan Coe: New kid with golden gloves.*

was a huge buzz playing for my national team and singing the national anthem," said the young Joey star.

Preparations against the Joeys next task, New Zealand have reached a boiling point as the squad assembles for a huge game against their archrivals.

"It's been pretty tough preparations for the up and coming game against New Zealand, the training has been pretty intense. The squad looks great though and the spirit is there as all the boys are becoming best mates and everyone is looking forward to this game. The two games against Japan were a good hit-out for the squad, hopefully we can improve on those games and take these two games out so we can go to Trinidad and Tobago later this year," said Nathan.

Young Coe's ambition this year is to try and cement a first team spot in the Joeys squad and to hopefully qualify for the World Cup. Also to try and win the National Youth League with the AIS.

Nathan Coe is a name that people should take note of. "I'd love to be playing in either the English Premier League or the Spanish Primera Liga", who knows this dream might soon become a reality for this future Socceroo.

# NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE

## NORTHERN DIVISION - RD 25

### ROUND 26 FIXTURES

**Fri** Parramatta Power Vs NSWIS 5:00pm Parramatta Stadium
**Sat** Wollongong Wolves Vs Sydney Olympic Youth 4:00pm WIN Stadium
**Sat** Canberra Cosmos Vs Newcastle United Colts 4:00pm Bruce Stadium
**Sun** Sydney Olympic Academy Vs AIS 4:00pm Wentworth Park
**Sun** QAS Vs Northern Spirit 4:00pm Ballymore
**Sun** Marconi Stallions Colts Vs Sydney United 7:00pm MarconiStadium
**Sun** Marconi Stallions Youth Vs ACT Academy 4:00pm Marconi Stadium
***BYE - Newcastle United Youth***

### LADDER

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A.I.S. | 24 | 19 | 3 | 2 | 67 | 28 | 60 |
| Marconi Colts | 21 | 15 | 2 | 4 | 55 | 17 | 48 |
| Parramatta | 23 | 15 | 3 | 5 | 66 | 31 | 48 |
| Wollongong | 23 | 12 | 6 | 5 | 50 | 26 | 42 |
| Northern Spirit | 23 | 13 | 3 | 7 | 55 | 33 | 42 |
| Newcastle Utd | 22 | 12 | 4 | 6 | 49 | 28 | 40 |
| Marconi | 22 | 11 | 2 | 9 | 50 | 38 | 35 |
| Sydney Oly | 22 | 10 | 4 | 8 | 51 | 41 | 34 |
| Q.A.S. | 24 | 11 | 1 | 12 | 38 | 54 | 34 |

### ROUND 25 RESULTS

**WEDNESDAY 28 MARCH**
**NSWIS 0 Marconi Stallions Colts 3**
(Rohrer 23, Maisano 55, Oricchio 75)

**SATURDAY 31 MARCH**
**Sydney United 2**
(M. Jedinak 49, Orlovic 69)
**Wollongong Wolves 4**
(Harries 42, Dimitrievski 51, Austin 62 66)

**Northern Spirit 7**
(Smith 7, Watkins 16, 55, MacRae 35 49, Prentice 76, Pisano 90)

**Sydney Olympic Academy 1**
(Amegashie 25)

**AIS 1** (Brosque 53)
**Marconi Stallions Youth 4**
(Anabalon 44, Da Roit 63, Gulesserian 66 Beauchamp 93)

## SOUTHERN DIVISION - RD 23

### LEADING GOALSCORERS

| Name | Club | Goals |
|---|---|---|
| Steve Manceski | South Melbourne | 26 |
| Nick Waite | Carlton Peninsula Blues | 14 |
| Denis Mustac | Eastern Pride | 13 |
| Dimitri Tsiaras | South Melbourne | 12 |
| Veton Korcarevski | South Dandenong | 11 |
| Brett Cunningham | Fawkner Blues | 10 |
| Robert Dolevski | Preston Lions | 10 |
| Aref El Dib | South Melbourne Eagles Ac | 10 |
| Carlo Melina | Carlton Peninsula Blues | 9 |
| Ben Cogger | Melbourne Knights | 9 |
| Viktor Memeti | South Dandenong | 9 |

### ROUND 23 RESULTS

**Wednesday 28 March 2001**
Bulleen Zebras v Melb Knights Academy
*(Round 22, match postponed)*

**Friday 30 March 2001**
**Melbourne Knights Academy 3**
(Ivan Razov 3)
**Peninsula Blues 0**

**Saturday 31 March 2001**
**Eastern Pride 5**
(Leo Trebbia 2, Anthony Pardo, Milos Petrevski, Miles Downie)
**Bulleen Zebras 0**
**Green Gully 0**
**Melbourne Knights 4**
(Adam Petko, Vangel Cecov, Ben Cogger, Tomislav Muretic)

**VIS 6 Preston Lions 0**
*(Already played, 10 March 2001)*

**Sunday 1 April 2001**
**Albury-Wodonga 3**
(Quentin O'Grady, Simon Vescio,Milan Sajkic)

**Fawkner Blues 4**
(Michael Vonja 2, Michael Amadeo, Chris Mitchell)

**Melbourne Knights 3**
**Peninsula Blues 0**

A hat-trick by Ivan Razov in 24, 29 and 50 minutes gave Melbourne Knights Academy its 3-0 win over the Peninsula Blues.

The first twenty minutes were very tight, but then the Academy took control to run out a very convincing winner in the end, though the Blues tried hard to stem the flow. Best for the Knights were Masumi Nishida, Ramazan Tavsancioglou and Razov.

**Eastern Pride 5**
**Bulleen Zebras 0**

Eastern Pride got back on top of the Southern Division ladder with a five-nil win over Bulleen Zebras at Mobil Stadium. Tony Pardo and Milos Petrevski put the Pride two goals up inside 38 minutes, then Leo Trebbia chimed in with two goals and the final one came from Miles Downie. The Pride was just too strong all round for the young Zebras.

**Green Gully 0**
**Melbourne Knights 4**

Melbourne Knights overcame Green Gully by four goals to nil at Green Gully Reserve on Saturday. Adam Petko's strike after 11 minutes was the only goal of the first half, and though the Knights dominated for long spells thereafter it was not till the 72nd minute that Ben Cogger doubled the Knights' lead. Goals by Vangel Cecov in 84 and Tomislav Muretic in 88 made the margin four.

Fifteen year old Tony Saric came on as substitute and hit the bar with a shot, the second time he has done that in as many games for the Knights. Christopher Antunovic was another to make an impression, while defender Daniel Piorkowski has been by far the most consistent player for the Knights this season.

**Albury Wodonga 3**
**Fawkner Blues 4**

Fawkner Blues just held on to beat Albury Wodonga by four goals to three at Myrtleford on Sunday night. Quentin O'Grady gave the Warriors a good start with a goal in 16 minutes, but Michael Vonja, formerly with the South Melbourne Eagles replied for the Blues in 20 minutes.

Milan Sajkic, the man of the match put the Blues ahead in 38 and Michael Amadeo extend the lead just on the interval. When Vonja scored his second in 72 minutes against the run of play at that point, it seemed all up for the Warriors, but Simon Vescio went up the other end to pull a goal back.

The Warriors hit the post, had several efforts scrambled away but had only one more goal by Chris Mitchell in the last minute to show for lots of endeavour.

• *South Melbourne plays South Dandenong at Bob Jane Stadium on Monday night and South Melbourne Eagles Academy had the bye.*

• *The round 22 match between Bulleen Zebras and Melbourne Knights Academy scheduled for last Wednesday was postponed.*

### ROUND 24 FIXTURES

**Saturday 7 April 2001**
Fawkner Blues v South Melbourne Eagles Academy,
*(C. B. Smith Reserve, 4 pm)*
Preston Lions v Green Gully,
*(BT Connor Reserve, 4pm)*
**Sunday 8 April 2001**
Peninsula Blues v Eastern Pride, *(Lawton , 4 pm)*
Melbourne Knights v Albury-Wodonga,
*(Knights Stadium, 4 pm)*
Bulleen Zebras 1 VIS 3
*(Already played Wednesday 13 December 2000)*
***Bye — South Dandenong***
***Bye — Melbourne Knights Academy***
***Bye — South Melbourne***

### LEAGUE LADDER

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A.I.S. | 23 | 19 | 3 | 1 | 66 | 24 | 60 |
| Eastern Pride | 21 | 17 | 2 | 2 | 67 | 12 | 53 |
| South Melb Institute | 19 | 17 | 0 | 2 | 103 | 22 | 51 |
| Melbourne Knights | 20 | 13 | 1 | 6 | 56 | 22 | 40 |
| VIS | 22 | 12 | 4 | 6 | 54 | 35 | 40 |
| Peninsula Blues | 19 | 11 | 1 | 7 | 47 | 30 | 34 |
| Melb Knights Academy | 19 | 10 | 1 | 8 | 25 | 27 | 31 |
| South Dandenong | 18 | 8 | 3 | 7 | 35 | 34 | 27 |
| South Melb Eagles Ac | 19 | 7 | 2 | 10 | 29 | 41 | 23 |
| Green Gully Cavaliers | 20 | 6 | 4 | 10 | 27 | 39 | 22 |
| Albury Wodonga | 20 | 3 | 4 | 13 | 20 | 54 | 13 |
| Bulleen Zebras | 20 | 3 | 4 | 13 | 25 | 61 | 13 |
| Fawkner Blues | 20 | 4 | 1 | 15 | 28 | 68 | 13 |
| Preston Lions | 19 | 3 | 1 | 15 | 21 | 92 | 10 |

# Country girls off to CHINA

## SOCCER WOMAN BY JANENE MAR

**Sixteen young country players are heading for a trip of a lifetime this October when they travel to China for a ten-day tour. The U15 girls from NSW Western Branch are believed to be the first junior women's team from Australia to travel to China.**

The team jets off on October 20th to Beijing where they will play five games, including two sports high schools. As well as providing a unique football experience, the tour also takes on an important cultural and friendship focus.

"How many kids get the chance to go to China?", enthused Western Branch President and NSW Amateurs director Ron Garvin. "At the end of the boys' tour, there was a big banquet with all the other teams, and despite the language difficulties, everyone had a great time. The kids somehow manage to still communicate with each other."

Family and friends also have the opportunity to share in the experience, the tour catering for a maximum total of fifty passengers, with around forty of those seats already filled. Everything from interpreters to cultural activities is organised by the Beijing International Sports Exchange organisation.

The venture follows two successful Western NSW boys' tours in the last couple of years and the fostering of good relations with the Chinese, and it is now planned to send a girls' team every alternate year. Western has since introduced teams from Wollongong and Blacktown to their Asian contacts.

From a football perspective, there could not be a more enthralling destination. China, 1999 World Cup and Atlanta Olympic silver medallists, are considered one of the most technically gifted teams. Yet outsiders seem to know little about the development and elite programs provided to their female footballers.

Garvin says China's development age groups for boys is 12-13 years, 14-15s and 16-17s, but is unsure if the same methods apply to the girls. The sports high schools provide the means for development, and in Beijing, these are owned by China TV.

The girls' touring team was finalised a month ago, after advertising the opportunity through its member Associations, personal letters to recent Western NSW triallists, and via newspapers. Selections were conducted over three trials, with around thirty hopefuls turning out. In the country regions, distance is often the most difficult barrier, but not for these players, thanks to the dedication of them and their families.

*Australia's Sarah Cooper (right) during a similar tour of China in 1998.*

The final team includes players from Ulan to Grenfell, representing a distance of around 400 kms east to west, and Wellington to Burraga, 350 kms north to south. Amongst the lineup are several NSW Country representatives.

Bathurst has the largest contingent of players for the tour, the district a long time vibrant nursery of women's soccer, and hosts of the State's most prestigious annual preseason competition. Bathurst was one of the first country outfits to compete in the tough NSW State League, and still continues to thrive at that level.

The project is a reflection of the growth of women's soccer throughout Western NSW and the exciting talent of the country youngsters. Garvin believes the area will produce another Matilda before too long.

"A lot of the girls don't take up soccer till they're ten or eleven years old, but then they just lap it up," said Garvin, who is also the coach for the tour. "The sportswomen amongst them decide to concentrate on soccer. You can really see the girls improve week by week."

NSW Country competed in both the junior and youth National Championships last year for the first time, and more than half the players hailed from Western Branch.

Western NSW takes in a massive land area, "three times the size of Tasmania" according to Garvin. Western covers from Blackheath to Broken Hill, Walgett to Burrawa, and Young and Grenfell. Member associations Mitchell (Bathurst/Lithgow area), Orange, and Lachlan (Parkes/Forbes/Cowra) each have junior as well as senior women's competitions, whilst Dubbo has its own senior comp. The outback region of Western Plains (Cobar/Broken Hill) struggles to run successful competitions with each centre so remote. Most of the females in these areas play in male leagues.

The touring team will train as a unit only a handful of times. A lot of the girls have played together before, and most will likely make the Western U14 or U16 representative teams for which they will train on a more regular basis.

These will be selected in June in preparation for the State Titles, this year to be hosted by Bathurst, starting 10 October. Illustrating the growth in the area, there are also moves afoot to also run a girls' U12 State Titles starting this year.

These rep teams will train together every week for the last month leading in to the Titles, including matches against boys teams.

Western brings their teams together for further match practice with a regular annual hitout against Blacktown. A fortnight ago, the boys and girls teams also travelled to Canberra to take on their development squads.

For now, it's all systems go with fundraising. One enterprising player went around to the local farmers who kindly donated a sheep each. Then it was off to the markets for auctioning, and $800 was raised in the process.

Anyone who can assist the fundraising committee can contact Western Branch on (02) 6361-2345.

### List of Players

| | |
|---|---|
| Ashley Alexander | Bathurst |
| Emily Baillee | Bathurst |
| Tara Booth | Burraga |
| Krystal Cassidy | Canowindra |
| Alana Hines | Bathurst |
| Jenna Hughes | Orange |
| Hannah Lee | Gemalla |
| Stephanie Matthews | Grenfell |
| Belinda Muldoon | Lithgow |
| Sarah Patterson | Bathurst |
| Caitlyn Piggin May | Orange |
| Nicole Ring | Orange |
| Gillian Rosconi | Kelso |
| Kaitlyn Shephard | Ulan |
| Alison Taunton | Bathurst |
| Stephanie Trimble | Wellington |

*Coach - Ron Garvin*

# It's a must-win for Wolves at WIN

**By Arvind Hickman**

**The Wollongong Wolves will meet Sydney Olympic in a crucial top four clash this Saturday that could determine the fate of both teams' top two aspirations.**

Wollongong will be desperate for a victory over their second placed rivals, following a string of poor recent results, two draws and a loss, which has seen them drop to fourth on the NSL ladder.

Wollongong's last game, against Sydney United, saw them waste numerous opportunities in a 1-1 draw. This has been the problem for the Illawarra side in their last three games as they have only scored twice, when they normally average over two goals a game.

*Saso Petrovski: Wolves' prolific scorer.*

*Dino Mennillo: Wolves' tireless playmaker.*

The Wolves will go into the game injury and suspension free but will miss Scott Chipperfield due to international duty.

Wolves Coach, Ron Corry, admits his chargers are down on confidence in recent games and believes a top two finish would be a struggle.

"This is as important as any other game but it will be very hard to finish above third or fourth. If we win it could change the situation but it will be a struggle," he said to ABSW last night.

"Maybe a long hard season is catching up with us but I think it's a bit more mental than physical."

"Olympic is a very good side with a very good blend of experience, pace and youth. Branko uses his players well and substitutes well, and on their day can beat anyone."

"We won't approach the game with a great deal of difference as It's mostly mental not physical," ended Corry.

Olympic on the other hand is confident coming off a stirring 3-1 victory over the Canberra Cosmos which saw them comeback from 1-0 down with ten men.

They will front up a near full strength team with playmaker Kresimir Marusic the only player missing through suspension after being sent off against the Cosmos last Sunday.

*Ante Juric: Sydney Olympic captain.*

Olympic Captain, Ante Juric stated to ABSW that he believes this game is one of the most important of the season if his team is to secure a top two finish.

"This is a very, very important game, a six pointer if you like. We are on track for a top two finish and to beat Wollongong will be all important on getting there," he said.

"To be honest they deserve to be where they are. They're one of the best teams in the country, up there with the South Melbournes'."

"Our confidence is high and we are doing pretty good lying second but I don't think we are playing to our ability.

"Hopefully the bigger games will bring the best in us.

"I think we have to concentrate a little on defence because they're such a good attacking side but we play best when we attack. It's probably our best defence.

A win for the Wolves would see them leapfrog Olympic on goal difference and could place them second depending on the Perth Glory result.

*Ron Corry: Wollongong Wolves coach.*

# Letters to the Editor

## Past errors afflicting Oz Soccer (1)

**Dear Sir,**

I would be most grateful if you could possibly place this letter in your next *"Letters to the Editor"* column.

Having followed with great interest the various letters placed in this column from the most ardent supporters that really care about where the future of this great world game is heading and have all failed to pin point the dilemma of this whole affair.

Sure its very easy to blame the present administration as to why this code is in shambles at this moment and what immediate measure should be taken to save this "sinking ship."

As you all know there have been hundreds of suggestions from various "Soccer Messiah's claiming to have found the right solutions that would resurrect this sleeping giant.

What all of you gentlemen have failed to see is that the "DAMAGE" was in fact made 24 years ago at the time that this blessed National League was first put into place in 1977.

Allow me to give you some facts for those of you that are not from that era. Back in the 60s, regarded by many as the "golden years of Australian Soccer "Soccer was booming despite having to put up with prehistoric grounds and primitive facilities attendance's at the local NSW First Division games were averaging from 5,000 to 8,000 in fact a game between (Apia-Pan Hellenic in 1964 which drew 27,250 to this day it is still a club record).

I recalled that during a soccer debate held at a local television station, Jimmy Bayutti then vice president of the Australian Soccer Federation suggested to Sir Arthur George president of the Australian Soccer Federation, that the time was right to create a viable National League but to everyone surprise Sir Arthur George flatly refused to take up the suggestion saying that Australia simply was not ready to tackle such a venture.

It wasn't until 12 years on in 1976 that the idea of creating a National League had resurfaced by then attendance a had fallen dramatically, local matches were averaging 2000-3000 top imports that had graced our shores for decades since as Baumgardner, Campana, Dunaj etc had either retired or returned to their homeland, and imports coming into the country were either of mediocre standards or simply not good enough in attracting big attendance as in the 60s it was then that in sheer desperation Sir Arthur George decided to push forward for a National League.

The first major error had been made for as we all know, gentleman any smart businessman will tell you that one always capitalises in expanding his business when its flourishing not when its diminishing. The second major error was start a national without promotion or relegation what a joke! The only country to have such a distinction.

No specific plan was set in place the whole matter was implemented within six months of its inaugural 1977 season. Well gentlemen for people that don't know, it took years for the BUNDESLIGA to be set up and waited to do it in least than six months?

Had a proper feasibility studies been carried out, and interested clubs seeking to join the proposed National League in 1977 to be given at least a four year notice (1972) so as to set up its supporters base, sponsorship, finance etc and in addition every club seeking participation be subjected to submit to SA a 12 year, three stage plan (consisting of Stage I. Its initial operation Stage 2 — its development — Stage 3 its (Consolidating period).

The introduction of a Salary Cup agreed by all clubs, for its first 12 years of operation (the downfall of many NSL clubs look at Carlton) probably we would NOT have been in the mess that we are in today and by now the National League would have been a sound venture and have the credibility to attract multi million dollars corporate sponsors at will.

**Claudio Barbato,**
**Canada Bay. NSW.**

## NINE and 2002 World Cup finals

**Dear Sir,**

It has been many months since the NINE network secured the free to air TV rights for the World Cup finals (Japan/Korea 2002).

Yet Nine has thus for failed to officially announce the deal let alone publicise it. Compare this to the endless publicity that proceeded and followed the winning of the AFL TV rights from 2002.

The World Cup finals is the biggest sporting show on earth yet Nine's attitude since securing the Australian TV rights as only confirmed the worst fears of Oz soccer fans.

Their involvement seems to be poorly driven by opportunism's which implies the coverage of Japan/Korea 2002 will be very basic.

Worst still Nine now has a huge long term investment in AFL as well as their ongoing involvement with Rugby League.

How ill they be able to do justice to a massive one off event like the World Cup which will be taking place right in the middle of the AFL and Rugby League seasons.

FIFA have stated it is a vital part of their charter that every country in the world gets the best TV coverage free to air of the World Cup finals. previously SBS provided the best possible coverage something Nine cannot possible match.

I wonder if amongst the readers of ABSW there are some legal eagles who have an opinion on this situation where Nine was awarded to TV rights over SBS despite FIFA having the right of veto to ensure that the TV rights go to the most suitable broadcaster. Nine have never pretended that they would give the World Cup finals the type of coverage SBS have previously given it. LEGAL EAGLE SOCCER FANS EXPRESS YOUR VIEWS ON THE SITUATION.

**R. Melor,**
**Bondi. NSW.**

## The truth about restructuring the NSL

**Dear Sir,**

Many ABSW readers have expressed all sorts of fanciful ideas or how the NSL can best be restructured.

As Pauline Hanson once said "please explain" to me in this case these points. Does it really matter what the total number of teams in the new revamped NSL is. Instead of an arbitang fixed number of 12 would it not be better to determine the number according to a strict and credible criteria.

Can anyone convincingly prove to me that Adelaide City, Sth Melbourne, Melbourne Knights, Sydney Utd, Sydney Olympic and Marconi (if they qualify) will ever be able to attract new fans in numbers from the mainstream community.

Competitive regional clubs like Wollongong and Newcastle definitely hate a place in the NSL. However even if successful they cannot lift the standing of the NSL like a successful big city club e.g. Perth Glory. That is why there is no place for dud regional NSL clubs like Canberra and Gippsland.

In may opinion the future prospects of the NSL more defendant on the success of four maybe five key clubs than marketing gurus, hype and cosmetic changes. These clubs are Perth Glory, Northern Spirit, NZ Kings and the newly proposed Adelaide club (Con Maklis). Parramatta and perhaps another club could be an unlikely surprise packet.

If by some miracle all these four key clubs can perform over the next few seasons then the NSL will get some much needed clubs in the key Sydney, Perth, Adelaide and NZ markets will provide a solid platform to advance on the difficult Melbourne and Brisbane markets.

For all the above to happen alot of things are going to have to fall into place perfectly and quickly. In OZ soccer getting anything half right is a great achievement in itself here lies the problem.

**R Melor,**
**Bondi. NSW.**

***Dear most valued reader,***

***ABSW endeavours to give every one of our valued readers the opportunity to express their opinions and point of view. Unfortunately we are bound by the arm of the law and simply can not publish material that is of a defamatory nature. NO newspaper in the world will deliberately print defamatory material, even if it is in the form of a letter to the editor.***

***The paper has as much responsibility for work sent in by its readers as it does for work done by its journalists. That is the law and unfortunately we can't change it. We therefore plead with our readers to strive for accuracy, keep letters free of malice, brief and straight to the point.***

***ABSW is a firm believer of providing the Soccer public with a strong voice and we do this through our letters page.***

***We encourage all of our readers to contribute and share their views on what we believe is the greatest game in the world.***

***Yours in Sport,***
***Editor***

*Ljubo Lapskansky (left) and Andy Vargas both of Melbourne Knights celebrating a recent fine outing with the club.*

## 'Axe Souths, Knights'

**Dear Sir,**

I believe it is vital that South Melbourne and the Melbourne Knights be dropped from the NSL as soon as possible and be replaced by four current AFL clubs, preferably Essendon, Collingwood, Richmond and either Melbourne, Carlton or Geelong. This is for five reasons.

Firstly the two current clubs have failed to overcome their Greek and Croatian ethnic origins and hence have not attracted mainstream support.

Secondly these AFL clubs come complete with ready made spectator support, corporate sponsorship and a potentially huge television audience with Channel 7 now free to concentrate on soccer.

Thirdly playing in World Championships and any future Asian Cups overseas would lift the profile of these clubs on to another level altogether which would transcend their domestic restrictions in Australia.

Fourthly playing overseas would give the club sponsors outstanding international exposure for their products on a worldwide level.

Fifthly the Olympics and the Australia v Iran World Cup game showed Melbournians will attend soccer matches in vast numbers if the sporting occasion is right.

So let's give the Melbourne public the teams they can relate to every week and then we can begin to market and promote soccer in Victoria on that basis.

Think of the exciting possibilities then!!

**Mike Joske,**
**Perth. WA**

## On South Coast Eagles

**Dear Sir,**

Great Magazine. Keep up the good work.

I am writing to you today in response to a letter published in your magazine dated 20/3/01 and written by a Mike Joske of Perth, WA One statement I cannot agree with and that is the one referring to the possibility of a new consortium, the South Coast Eagles S.C. replacing Adelaide City Force S.C. here in Adelaide.

If and when the South Coast Eagles get under way (hopefully filling the void left by the departure of the Adelaide Sharks from the NSL two season ago.

Mr Joske mentioned that he was from Perth but did not say what side he supports in the NSL.

I can only presume that it can be Perth Glory.

Well, I am a Perth Glory supporter currently residing in Adelaide and I can tell you that this is a two team town just like, dare I say Perth will be sometime in the near future.

You can't beat the atmosphere of a home town derby.

On finishing I'd just like to say that the only team to replace. Adelaide City Force will be.

Adelaide City!

**Andrew Wales.**
**Eden Hills. SA.**

# OFF THE CROSSBAR

By Allan Crisp

## RED DEVILS UNDER REPAIR

**Campbelltown City Soccer Club, alias the Red Devils, are under "new management" and their Newton Sports Field pitch is under repair.**

On the surface, this statement indicates gloom and doom for the club, but nothing could be further from the truth, with the new "manager" being recently appointed senior coach Jan Kierno, while the $200,000 upgrading of the Devils number one pitch and other innovations spells good news. Not only will the pitch be improved, but a general revamp of all of the club's extensive facilities are in full swing.

Meanwhile, Campbelltown City's second pitch will be used for all home Premier League matches involving the Red Devils and Adelaide City until June.

Access to the second venue is via Whites Lane, while catering and bar facilities will be serviced from the Junior Soccer Club.

Post match functions will be held as usual in the main function room located on the first floor of the,main building.

New club chairman Orazio DiCarlo said negotiations for the improvements were initiated with the Campbelltown City Council by the previous chairman Ugo Rossetto and secretary Nick Ianera over 18-months ago.

*Lachlan Campbell: New addition to the Red Devils' ranks.*

Areas in which new work has been completed or are in progress are — new perimeter fencing of the complex; perimeter fencing of the main training pitch; new lighting for the junior training grounds and renovations of the Junior Clubrooms.

The vibrant club is housed on 22 acres which contains five playing pitches and two half pitches that are used by 60 senior players, 40 amateur league players and 180 juniors.

The multi-million dollar complex is the closest facility to a mega-plex cinema, as it is capable of staging five matches simultaneously.

All up, the Red Devils can boast seven fields, two function rooms, four bars and canteen facilities as well as a multi-purpose indoor stadium.

Now that's what we call serving the community!

On the playing front, the news is less bright with central midfielder Paul Beltrame ruled out for the season because of work commitments.

The former Marconi player has reluctantly quit playing due to increased demands on his time as a college soccer coach.

Key striker Larry Piscioneri also could miss the entire season, dependent on the success of major knee surgery to repair damaged ligaments.

Devils captain Michael Menechella has had surgery on a dislocated knee cap, an injury that could sideline him for a further four weeks.

These set-backs are softened by the signing of Sergio Melta Medal winner Lachlan Campbell from Parramatta Power and the good pre-season form of Joe Barbaro, Mario Saltari, David Crisci, Dominic Signoriello, Ryan Campbell, Adam Perre and Jun Udagawa.

Kierno said he is pleased to have acquired Lachlan Campbell and regards the acquisition of Laurie Berlingeri from Blue Eagles as a further bonus.

"The reason I went to the club is because it has such good young talent," Kierno said. "They have much to learn tactically, but they are responding to hard work."

## NORMAN TO CONQUER

Former Adelaide City star Eric Norman has been appointed coach of the SA Amateur League State team.

Norman will be assisted by his ex-Para Hills coaching colleague Gary Collis. The duo will begin their new venture by guiding the SA squad in the national amateur championships to be conducted in Melbourne from June 3-10.

## WEST END CUP DRAW

**West End Federation Cup holders Croydon Kings have been drawn to meet Premier League newcomers Port Pirie Spirit in the second round of the senior knock-out cup series on Monday, April 16.**

Reigning league champions Blue Eagles will figure in an all-Premier League clash against Raiders in a key Easter Monday tie.

### ROUND 2

Campbelltown Red Devils v Salisbury Apaches
Salisbury Villa v Fulham United
Metro Stars v St Peters Old-Collegians (TK Shutter Reserve).
Raiders v Blue Eagles
Cumberland Foxes v Playford Patriots
Croydon Kings v Port Pirie Spirit
Enfield Falcons v White City Warriors (Rushworth Reserve)
Panthers v Birkalla.

## SOUND IDEA

Adelaide Radio 5RPH (1197AM) is expanding its soccer content by introducing a new Sunday morning program, entitled "SOS — Soccer On Sunday."

The new show which took to the airwaves last Sunday, featured former Australian international midfielder John Perin, Peter Millar and Allan Crisp.

RPH's established program, the Marshall Thompson Breakfast Soccer Show will continue with the revised time slot of 7am-8.30am each Tuesday with Crisp, Millar, Phil Scardigno, Perin and a host of guests under the production baton of Robbie Popplestone.

*Allan Crisp can be heard on the Marshall Thompson Homes Pacific Real Estate 5RPH (1197AM) Breakfast Soccer Show each Tuesday from 7.30am-9am, along with Croydon Kings coach Phil Scardigno, Channel 10 Sports Reporter Robbie Popplestone, Peter Millar, The Advertiser Soccer writer Meno Toutsidis and former Australian international John Perin.*

# South Australia Premier League Results

### SA PREMIER LEAGUE

| | |
|---|---|
| Blue Eagles .....7 | Port Lion Pirates ....0 (Brooks 4, Sergi 2, Kierno) |
| Croydon Kings .....1 (Musalino) | Campbelltown .....3 (J. Barbaro, Monteros, Daniel Menechella) |
| Playford Patriots ....1 (Pearce) | White City Warriors .2 (Armour 2) |
| Port Pirie Spirit .....1 (Christopoulos) | Metro Stars .....1 (Schimizzi) |
| Olympic FC .....0 | Modbury Jets .....0 |
| Adelaide City .....0 | Raiders .....1 (Bratic) |
| Noarlunga Bulldogs .1 (Robertson) | Salisbury Apaches ...1 (Robson) |
| Western Strikers ....0 | Cumberland Foxes ..0 |

### STATE LEAGUE

| | |
|---|---|
| Panthers .....1 (Honeysett) | Hills Hawks .....1 (Maxwell) |
| Birkalla .....8 (Hagias 4, Tsekinis 3, Tibaldi) | Cobras .....0 |
| Para Hills Knights ..2 (Jones 2) | Seaford Surfers .....0 |
| Enfield Falcons .....3 (Costa, Neet, Rossi) | Northern Demons ...2 (K. Alagich, Giancaspro) |

### ROUND 2
### PREMIER LEAGUE

**Friday, April 6**
Modbury Jets v Blue Eagles

**Saturday, April 7**
Port Lion v Adelaide City
White City v Port Pirie Spirit
Metro Stars v Olympic FC
Campbelltown City v Playford Patriots
Raiders v Croydon Kings

### STATE LEAGUE

**Saturday, April 7**
Cobras v Western Strikers
Salisbury Apaches v Birkalla
Northern Demons v Noarlunga Bulldogs
Seaford Surfers v Enfield Falcons
Hills Hawks v Para Hills Knights
Cumberland Foxes v Panthers

# GLORY-SEEKING PLAYERS BESIEGE COSMOS

By Graham Cooke

**There may still be doubts cast on the Canberra Cosmos' survival in the National Soccer League, but club officials are continually getting votes of confidence from players all over Australia.**

Coach Mike Milovanovic said he had been surprised at the number of players currently attached to other NSL clubs who had contacted the Cosmos to enquire about a move to Canberra. "Some would like to come right away, but others are talking about next season," he said. "We are continuing negotiations with some of them."

His comments come amid a growing feeling in some soccer circles that the NSL will not be cut to the 12 teams touted as the number for a "restructured," competition next season.

Many observers point to the fact the original 16-team competition has already been cut by one with the loss of Carlton, and could well reduce to 14 as Eastern Pride continue to struggle. Keeping the competition at 14, which has been the most popular number for the league over the years, would rule out the likelihood of costly litigation if viable clubs were thrown out.

Defender Con Anthopoulos, who joined Canberra from the stricken Carlton at the beginning of the year, said he believed the Cosmos deserved to survive.

"In fact, I still believe we can make the top six," he said. "I have seen enough of the side to realise that on our day we are capable of beating the best teams in the competition.

"Our main problem, and the thing we really have to work on, is our consistency."

*Mike Milovanovic: Canberra Cosmos coach.*

# NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

## ADELAIDE CITY FORCE 0
## MARCONI STALLIONS 0

*By Allan Crisp*

**This tense, scoreless game brought Adelaide City's hopes of contesting a record 12th successive NSL finals series to a shattering end and retained the top six chances of the Marconi Stallions.**

That is the considered assessment of this scribe, but the coaches in charge of the respective destinies of the aforementioned clubs mouthed varied post-match opinions.

"The (finals) door is closed," was Force coach Zoran Matic's terse assessment, while Marconi boss Eddie Krncevic said he believed, "Adelaide City still has a chance."

"I thought we were unlucky not to pinch a goal," Krncevic said as he confessed to being happy with the outcome — "This was a positive result for us."

While under the scrutiny of the media scrum, both Matic and Krncevic were asked to defend their squad selections for this crucial game.

Matic, asked to explain why he again fielded his most creative player, Aurelio Vidmar as sweeper, while Krncevic was quizzed on his omission from the starting line-up of former Socceroo striker Kris Trajanovski.

Were Vidmar's attacking talents wasted in the defensive role, albeit that the caretaker Australian captain again filled the position with consumate distinction?

"When a lolly is sweet you want to eat it and also keep it in your pocket. You can't have both," mused Matic.

That quaint variation of the standard, "You can't have your cake and eat it too," enabled the colourful Matic to get the message across that he would continue to do things his way.

Krncevic defended his choice of Todd Brodie and Royce Brownlie ahead of Trajanovski by saying, "I decided to do something tactically different.

"I thought Royce did quite well and that Todd also did the job that was needed."

Matic said he was satisfied, "In some areas," with his players, but refused to reveal the shortcomings — "I won't tell you, I'll tell my players."

The Force must now face Melbourne Knights away and Brisbane Strikers at home, minus Vidmar while their captain is on national team duty.

Vidmar's telling influence against Marconi was ably supported by the brilliant goalkeeping of Adrian Cagalj, allied to the magnificent defending of ex-Knights' captain Ante Kovacevic and the efforts of blossoming tyro Kris Rees.

At the opposite end, Mike Turnbull provided the necessary goalkeeping expertise for the visitor, while Dominic Longo, Pan-Keun Kim and Mark Babic made life goallessly unbearable for Claudio Pelosi and young Scott Tunbridge.

Ironically, it was the consistent probing of former City men, Angelo Costanzo and John Gibson, along with classy Brendan Renaud that gave Marconi the midfield edge that fired most of the Stallions attacks.

The pressure of the occasion doubtless contributed to the 34 unforced turnovers that were equally divided between the combatants and lowered the standard of the contest.

Nevertheless, there were 29 shots on goal, with just 13 on target, statistics (supplied by Mark Baylis of Triple M and C7) that give testimony to the diligence of the defences.

However, the major concern for Marconi as the Stallions trot, rather than bolt towards the finals must be that this was their fourth successive scoreless game and that their 36 goals netted is the lowest tally of the current top six.

*Adelaide City defender Brad Hassell (left) contests the ball aerially with Marconi Stallions' Angelo Costanzo.*

## FOOTBALL KINGZ 3
## BRISBANE STRIKERS 2

**Dennis Ibrahim scored a unique hat-trick last Saturday night in Auckland to ensure that Football Kingz trounce visiting Brisbane Strikers 3-2.**

With both sides requiring wins to keep alive their slim hopes of reaching the NSL playoffs, each fielded attacking formations and went into attack from the outset.

The Kingz dominated early and had a penalty appeal turned down in the 15th minute after a possible handball in the Brisbane box. The incident was the cue for Brisbane to go on the offensive, with Brazilian striker Fernando Rech spearheading their onslaught.

Rech, not surprisingly, opened scoring in the 22nd minute.

A fine pass down the left by Peter Grierson was returned by Neil Meredith before being tapped-in by Rech, who had ghosted between Kingz defender Gerard Davis and goalkeeper Julio Cuello.

The goal however sparked the Kingz into life and Ibrahim smashed the ball into the Brisbane net to level the scores just five minutes later.

The German-born striker wasn't finished yet as in the 39thminute, he ran onto a long Chris Jackson free-kick and volleyed home.

In the 44th minute, referee Derek Rugg awarded the Kingz a penalty which was met by strong protests from Brisbane Strikers. Ibrahim stepped-up to complete his hat-trick, sending keeper Corey Baldock the wrong way.

The Queensland side responded in the second-half with Jeremy Harris scoring a similar type of Rech's first-half goal .

*Kingz' hat-trick hero Dennis Ibrahim.*

The Kingz tired-out as the Strikers pressed forward, but they failedto make the most of a wealth of possession and couldn't force an equaliser.

The Strikers continued to expose the Kingz defence, with Cuello forced to make two good saves in succession just after 60 minutes — from a Rech header and then when facing Rech on a one-on-one situation after he had slipped past the Kingz defence.

## EASTERN PRIDE 2
## PARRAMATTA POWER 1

**Beleaguered Eastern Pride secured their third win in the ongoing 2000-2001 NSL season on Saturday night at Mobil Park, when they stopped nine-man Parramatta Power, 2-1 in a bad-tempered game.**

*Eastern Pride's John Hutchinson, who was at the centre of a melee midway against Parramatta.*

Power ace midfielder, Milan Blagojevic and goalkeeper Andrew Crews were both sent-off in the space of nine minutes of the first half, in two moments of madness.

Pride scored after just five minutes through in-form striker, Naum Sekulovski, who surprised Powers' goalkeeper, Andrew Crews with a driving shot that caught the entire Power defence napping.

The goal and subsequent expulsions of Power players, killed off any vibrancy in the match. The talking point however centred around the red cards issued to two Power players midway through the game.

Blagojevic was the first to go following his heated debate with the referee over a tackle involving Eastern Pride's John Hutchinson. The tackle was a prelude to a mass melee that halted proceedings for several minutes as each and every player on the pitch sought to voice their opinions all at the same time.

Hutchinson's clumsy challenge was penalised with a yellow card but it led to fierce protests from Blagojevic whose attempt to physically assault Hutchinson eventually forced referee Craig Zetter to expel him from the game.

Crews, who was the only player not involved in the earlier melee, was the next player to receive his marching orders after a clumsy challenge on Hutchinson outside the 18-yard box which almost crippled the Eastern Pride defender.

Reserve goalkeeper Liam Reddy came on to replace Crews with youngster Luke Roodenberg pulled out to accommodate him.

Reddy however could not prevent Pride's second goal as Robbie Puca's great strike from a freekick outside the 18 yard box eluded Power's human wall and into the net .

For most of the half Pride's attack was unimaginative, disjointed and even bewildering and Parramatta deservedly got a goal back in the 63rd minute after Pride captain Clayton Bell scored an own goal.

Manny Gotis and Bell both had excellent opportunities to restore the two-goal buffer but failed to take their chances in front of goal.

Understandably, Pride coach Jeff Hopkins was livid at the lost opportunities by his team. "I thought we were good in the first half, we pressured them and got the first goal," he said.

## NORTHERN SPIRIT 1
## MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 4

*By Arvind Hickman*

**The Melbourne Knights have scored their first ever win over the Northern Spirit with a relentless 4-1 victory at North Sydney Oval last Friday night.**

The Knights were dominant for a majority of the game and could easily have scored six or seven against an out of sorts Spirit, lacking in creativity and intensity.

It was the perfect start for new coach and player Andrew Marth, who believes his team will only need eight more points to cement a finals berth.

"I think Adelaide (next week) will be the do-or-die for us for the top six," he said.

Northern Spirit started the game slightly better and created the first genuine chance when a Ben Burgess header hit the left upright and then Craig Foster blasted the rebound over.

The Melbourne Knights then took control and scored their first goal in the 21st minute.

Toto Da Costa roamed onto the left flank and was played into space before crossing a teasing ball into the Spirit box. Rodrigo Vargas came up from defence to head the ball past Paul Henderson for a 1-0 lead.

Only four minutes later Lubo Lapsansky made it 2-0 from a free-kick after Da Costa was fouled 25 metres out. Lapsansky curled the shot into the top left corner of the goal leaving the Spirit keeper with little chance.

This seemed to rattle the Spirit as they started to make some reckless tackles, incurring yellow cards.

The Spirit then shot themselves in the foot on the stroke of half time when striker Lee Feeney received his second yellow card and was sent off.

Feeney's first yellow was for kicking the ball away while his second was for a late tackle.

Early in the second half the Knights should have gone three up when Da Costa had the keeper to beat from a tight angle after Craig Foster made a critical mistake. The Angolan International couldn't beat Henderson who got down smartly to parry the ball away.

The Knights scored their third goal in the 67th minute after Ivan Jolic made a brilliant run down the right flank skipping past two defenders. He then crossed the ball to Da Costa who headed the ball onto the crossbar, before hitting the rebound into Andrew Marth's back, and into the goal.

*Northern Spirit's Daniel Watkins (left) holds off Melbourne Knights' Jason Vukadin.*

Spirit grabbed a consolation in the 75th minute when a Foster free-kick was tucked away by unmarked Stuart Howson.

But in the 77th minute Joel Porter finished the rout after Da Costa broke free and passed to his strike partner in space who beat the keeper with relative ease.

Porter might have had a hat-trick after two brilliant chances with only the keeper to beat, but the damage was done and the Knights ran away 4-1 victors.

The Knights are now well placed in fifth position and loom as genuine finals contenders after a week of turmoil which saw former Coach Vlado Vanis walk out on the club.

# NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

## SOUTH MELBOURNE 1
## NEWCASTLE UNITED 0

**By Bert Van Bedaf**

**South Melbourne made hard work of its victory, but it finally broke down Newcastle to finish the game 1-0 and go four points clear on top of the ladder.**

It was South's third 1-0 win in a row and if it had been a boxing match, the league leader again would have won on points, but since only goals count in football, the Lakesiders kicked themselves for not scoring earlier. They had to wait until the 69th minute to claim victory against a defensive Newcastle.

United had come to Melbourne with a draw in mind and perhaps catching South on the break to snatch a goal — and the team nearly achieved its mission.

"We had to stack men behind the ball and hit them on the break. We had three chances on the counter, but we weren't sharp enough to catch them.

But the plan nearly worked, except for one moment of madness," Newcastle coach Lee Sterrey said.

United's "moment of madness" allowed an unmarked Con Boutsianis to challenge on goal and subsititute John Anastasiadis to strike on the rebound. "One of my defenders didn't move across to mark (Boutsianis). The back-four must have been Stevie Wonder with binoculars to not read it," he said.

In contrast South had quite a few chances, despite the fact it was a tough task to break down Newcastle's ten-men defence.

Andy Vlahos had a cross saved off the line by Todd McManus after Bob Catlin had dropped the ball, while he pushed a Goran Lozanovski shot for a corner in the opening ten minutes.

New Zealand international Vaughan Coveny shot over the bar in the 22nd minute and Simon Colosimo watched his low header fall outside the post two minutes later.

Newcastle's only chance came a minute before the break, when Bradley Wieczorek caught Michael Petkovic off guard, but the Socceroo 'keeper scrambled back to push the ball over the bar.

Lozanovski hit wide two minutes into the second half and in a series of attacks that should have provided South with the breakthrough Vlahos first shot into Catlin and then hit the post on the rebound in the 54th minute.

"I respect the players for churning out another result. The boys dug in today and we were a little bit flat. It is tough to break down a team that has ten men behind the ball. But we did it again and we got a result," South coach Mike Petersen said.

*South Melbourne stopper, Simon Colosimo (left) contests with Newcastle's Andy Harper.*

South's persistence and patience finally paid off, when Fausto De Amicis set up the attack. Boutsianis popped up and put Catlin under pressure.

Catlin parried his attempt and it fell for Anastasiadis, who hit the net on the turn for the decider.

The home side played near-perfect possession football and continued to press United. South created several more chances without extending the lead in a game that produced few highlights.

South Melbourne will play its round 26 match against Sydney United tomorrow night (Wednesday, April 4) at Bob Jane stadium. Scheduled for Sunday, the match has been brought forward since South has four players in the Socceroos squad preparing for its World Cup qualifiers at Coffs Harbour.

Missing will be captain Paul Trimboli, who has accumulated four yellow cards. He's the first South player to do so this season. "It's got to be some sort of a record. It shows we're concentrating on football and nothing else," Petersen said.

Zeljko Susa is expected in Trimboli's place, after missing seven matches because of injury.

Striker Vas Kalogeracos is also in contention after recovering from a hamstring injury. "Vas might also find himself in the fray," Petersen said of his planned changes.

## SYDNEY OLYMPIC 3
## CANBERRA COSMOS 1

**By John Economos**

**Sydney Olympic after a pathetic first session, and a goal down at the break last Sunday at Belmore Sports Ground, exploded into scintillating second half action to score three goals and defeat a gallant young Canberra Cosmos by 3-1.**

Referee Mark Shield was forced to issue red cards to Olympic's make-shift striker Kresimir Marusic (48th-second yellow) and Canberra's left wingback David Arranz (71st-hand-ball inside the box).

Following each dismissal, both teams dispensed playing with a sweeper as first Olympic's Ante Juric, then Canberra's Robbie Hooker, pushed into the midfield to plug up the voids created by the respective red cards.

Olympic's ball-skilled striker, and at long last back to long lost form, Pablo Cardozo, and Canberra's outstanding goalie, Anthony Giannasca, grabbed the spotlight in this battle.

Canberra drew first blood five minutes from the break when Alex Castro was fed through by midfielder, Ilija Prenzoski. A calm Castro from just inside the edge of the box and on an angle, methodically cleared Olympic's advanced goalie Clint Bolton with a delicate long lobbed shot that first clipped the underside of the cross bar, bounced down and well over the goal-line before back-spinning out.

Olympic was rattled and in fact could have been down 0-2 had Castro put away another clear chance as early as in the fourth minute that Bolton easily gathered.

Canberra's elastic goalie, Anthony Giannasca, showed brilliance in the 32 nd minute when he stole the ball off the head of Olympic's left wingback Andrew Packer who had climbed well in front of goals to meet a Lindsay Wilson cross.

Olympic's ace-striker Pablo Cardozo from deep midffield rifled a long ball wide to the right to find Wilson in the 38th minute. Wilson's cross infield found make-shift striker Kresimir Marusic whose side footed attempt went wide of the target.

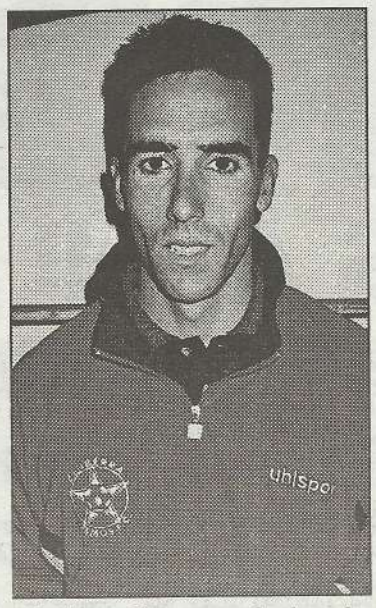
Almost immediately after the dismissal of Marusic, Olympic woke up and sprang into non-stop attacking action that had Canberra under relentless siege for the rest of the match.

Ten minutes after the break Olympic levelled the scores through a goal by lanky skipper and sweeper, Ante Juric. Cardozo brilliantly engineered the goal when he pushed the ball across goals wide to the left before swinging round to clip it back inside for Juric to power in a spectacular header.

Olympic's confidence levels rocketted from this goal and ignited hell for Canberra. Both Juric and right wingback Lindsay Wilson started making huge slicing cuts into Canberra's defence lines.

In the 69th minute a clever Cardozo free kick presented substitute Franco Parisi with a chance from close-range which the teenager blasted on target, but the ever-alert goalie Giannasca made a fabulous block.

The 71st minute saw Canberra's left wingback David Arranz concede a penalty when he hand-balled a Cardozo blaster inside the box. Arranz was red-carded leaving Cardozo to nail in Olympic's second goal from the penalty spot and take the lead for the first time in the match.



*Anthony Giannasca: Canberra's courageous custodian.*

Parisi hit the base of the left upright in the 78th minute and two minutes later, a move that involved Cardozo, Wilson and Cardozo again that set up Juric whose blast shaved the left post.

Five minutes from the end Canberra's substitute and Urugyuanan linkman Milton Cortes, put fellow substitute Paul Ivanic through into the box but the teenager ballooned his effort over the horizontal.

Three minutes from the bell, the by now uncontrollable Cardozo whipped in a sizzingly accurate cross from the left that found a grateful and free Wilson well inside the box to power his header past a completely exposed Giannasca.

Smelling blood, Olympic swarmed like vultures over a carcass well inside Canberra's box in the dying seconds and in succession, shots fired in by Parisi, Augerinos and Cardozo were all unbelievably somehow kept out by Giannasca.

Outstanding for Olympic were 'Man Of The Match' and 'Chief Goal Engineer' Cardozo, skipper Juric, right wingback Wilson and 'screener' Damon Collina, whilst for the Canberrans, goalkeeper Anthony Giannasca was brilliant with solid performances from teenage midfielder Daniel Aliffi and skilled striker Alex Castro.

Olympic's coach Branko Culina later reflected: "We seem to play better with 10 men, they scored a superb goal and were very competitive. We bounced back, (second half), and played great football. Not too many are more comfortable in taking penalties than Cardozo. Young players go up and down, (performance), and you try to anticipate when they're going down," Culina summed up.

Canberra's recently new coach mike Milovanovic, was relaxed with the defeat, stating: "The worst thing that happened to us was when Marusic was sent off. Olympic played very well with 10 men and showed that they have great depth in the club. I'm jealous. Some of our young players such as Aliffi in the midfield were very good. We had quite a few young ones playing that all did well, (Ivanic 18, Kemp 18, Aliffi 19).", ended Milovanovic.

## SYDNEY UNITED 1
## WOLLONGONG WOLVES 1

**By Arvind Hickman**

**Sydney United have held NSL Champions the Wollongong Wolves to a frustrating 1-1 draw at the Sydney United Sports Centre last Sunday.**

Wollongong were seeking a win to keep up the pressure on front runners South Melbourne and Sydney Olympic but now find themselves in fourth place after Perth Glory picked up three charity points.

Sydney United needed to win to have any real chance of a finals berth, but neither team really showed enough to deserve the three points.

The result didn't please Wolves Coach Ron Corry, who now believes his team would have to win it's remaining games to cement a top two finish.

"We had enough chances in the first half and the second but they fought back strongly. By not taking our chances we allowed them back into the game and they fought well," he said.

"It gets harder now and we have Olympic next week and that could go along way in determining our fate. If we win the rest of our five games we could come second."

United Coach, Velimir Kupresak, was pleased with his chargers passionate fightback.

"This was a big game for us because they are the best attacking team in the country. The boys showed they had the character to compete today and we've got another five games so we'll see," he said.

Wollongong started off the game in a flurry and almost scored when Ben Blake's header was brilliantly saved by Brett Hughes in the United goal.

Francis Awaritefe had the home team's best chance of the first half in the 11th minute when he riffled in a shot that was saved by the diving Dean Anastasiadis.

Matt Horsley missed a golden opportunity late in the half when a Stuart Young shot was miscued and went straight to the Wolves captain in the penalty area. Horsley failed to control his shot and missed the target completely.

The Wolves grabbed the lead in the 50th minute when defensive midfielder, David Huxley, finished a move that he had started. Huxley played Saso Petrovski into space down the left flank, the striker then crossed the ball low and hard. Stuart Young provided a deceptive dummy and Huxley blasted home a rare goal.

*David Huxley: Wolves' goalscorer.*

United almost equalised ten minutes later when Tom Pondeljak skipped into the box and passed to Awaritefe who's weak shot beat Anastasiadis but hit the right upright.

The Bravehearts continued to battle on passionately and were rewarded in the 76th minute when substitute Goran Talevski hit a spectacular shot into the top left corner from 25 metres out.

The Wolves should have grabbed a late winner when Robert Middleby's cross was met by the unmarked Young, but his header could only find the crossbar.

# The Power Host The Kingz

*By Hanna Nwanori*

A amiable coach of Parramatta Powrs, David Mitchellwas frank enough to admit yesterday that this weekend's game against Auckland-based Football Kingz would not be a tea party.

Opening-up to ABSW last night, Mitchell confessed that, "It is going to be very difficult for us, particularly after our loss to Eastern Pride over the weekend, where in my opinion, we were cheated".

Without doubt, Mitchell was obviously referring to the queer sequence of events in the game against Eastern Pride, that led to the expulsion of midfield general, Milan Blagojevic and goalkeeper Andrew Crews.

Dwelling further on his teams plight, Mitchell disclosed that, "as things stand now, we don't have a goalkeeper. Les Pogliacomi, the stand-in goalkeeper is injured, and since we have filed an appeal to Soccer Australia to overturn the expulsion of Milan and Andrew, we are awaiting response from them".

Infact, Mitchell hinges a lot of hope on a favourable ruling coming from SA, if Parramatta are to harbour any hopes. of winning this weekend against Kingz. "It is going to be a tough game for us", still remains Mitchell summary of what awaits Parramatta this weekend.

David Mitchell: Parramatta coach.

Alex Tobin: The Power's towering sweeper and captain.

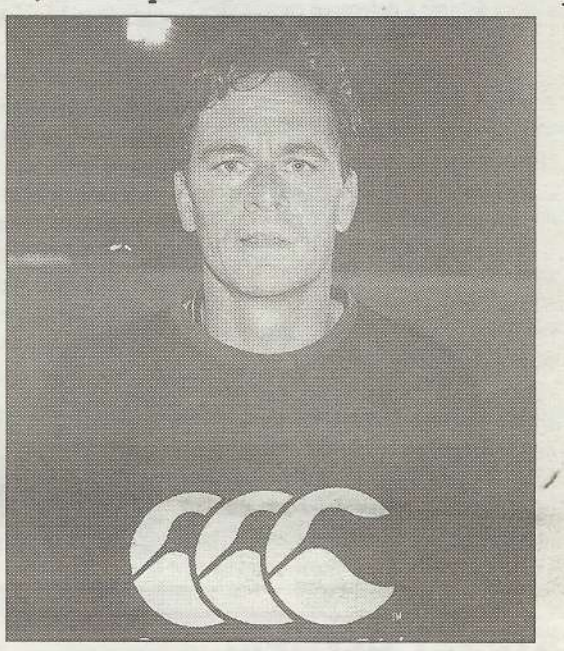
Ahmad Elrich: The Power's dynamic right wing-back in action.

The suspensions and injuries are coming at a bad time for Power, following on the heels of the loss of enterprising striker Joel Griffiths to injury in the Round 24, 3-1 win over Sydney Olympic.

Notwithstanding, the Power can still boast of enough ammunition in their reserve to stop the Kingz. Another young-hopeful, Luke Roodenburg, as well as Ahmad Elrich are sure to spearhead the attack against Kingz, who will be looking up to ever-improving Dennis Ibrahim to re-enact his new-found form in front of goal, again this weekend.

German-born Ibrahim has been a constant threat to defences in the NSL all season, and his unique hat-trick against Brisbane Strikers, last weekend did not really come as a surprise. He will enjoy normal service from Harry Ngata and Paul Urjovic in a bid to breakdown Power's defence, ably-marshalled by the undying Alex Tobin.

Interestingly, this will be a game between nine and ten, as both teams hit the home stretch of the season, with scant hope of catching the leaders.



Wynton Rufer: The Kingz' Player/Coach.

# Marconi vs The Glory

**By John Economos**

**Marconi who over the week-end slipped from fifth spot on the League ladder to sixth, face on Saturday night the team boasting as the League's highest scoring side, the Perth Glory, at Marconi Stadium.**

Despite the Glory having a bye last weekend and thus being granted the standard three League points, the team from the West has crept up from fourth spot to joint-third with the Wollongong Wolves who were last Sunday held to a held to a 1-1 draw by Sydney United in Sydney.

The Glory to date has nailed in no less than 63 goals, a massive 32 of which have been scored by their brilliant and dangerous dynamic strike-duo, Bobby Despotovski and Damian Mori.

But the Glory could sorely miss the powerful strike services of lethal goalscorer, Damian Mori, who is on national duty with Frank Farina's World Cup squad up in Coffs Harbour.

Glory will also have left sided player Scott Miller away with Farina's national squad whilst the goalscoring central marker Jamie Harnwell will miss this battle through injury.

It's possible that Perth's coach Bernd Stange will bring inside experienced flank striker Alistair Edwards to a more central position to link up with Bobby Despotovski .

The Marconi coach stated to ABSW last night: "Thankfully we have no suspensions or injuries to worry about.

"Our game last Friday night against Adelaide City was a tough one but we needed a result and we got one.

"It was a good solid all round team effort that gave me a disciplined performance.

"You have to also remember that it was a very important game for Adelaide City as well," reasoned Krncevic.

Krncevic went on to add: "It's obvious that the Glory will treat this as a most important game, a game they must win to stay in contention for a Top Two spot.

"So I fully expect them to come over to Sydney with an all-out attack strategy.

"That will be very good to see and it will certainly be a change from the teams that come here to defend," Krncevic summed up.

The Glory's head coach Bernd Stange, stated to ABSW last night:

"We'll try to beat them because we lost at home 0-1 to them in Round 1 and we will be playing for three points on Saturday.

"I think that for us we will finish in the Top Six without problems and if we do win on Saturday night it will give us a big chance to finish in the Top 2 spot and have the Grand Final again in Perth.

"Without key players it is a big problem.

"Some of our youngsters will have to now step in and maybe surprise me, but both Morii and Despotovski, as a pair, have been outstanding for us this year.

"Marconi is a good young team with a good coach and I think they'll make the Top Six Series.

"It's always exciting to play against Marconi.

"They have been good so far with quality and entertaining football, and I'm looking forward to playing them on Saturday night," ended the former national coach of East Germany.

*Angelo Costanzo: Marconi's 'screener'.*

*Eddie Krncevic: Marconi's coach.*

*Bobby Despotovski: The Glory's fabulous marksman.*

*Bernd Stange: the Glory's coach.*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# Victorian Premier League

## ROUND 9

## SAINTS GO TOP OF THE TABLE

| | |
|---|---|
| St Albans | 1 |
| Altona East | 0 |

*By David Davutovic*

**St Albans Saints continued their great run with a slender 1-0 victory at home to Altona East on Sunday to go to the top of table.**

The winner was scored in the 53rd minute after former Melbourne Knights striker Mijo Trupkovic sent in a curling cross from the right that was clinically headed home by Ante Kelic.

Altona had most of the running early on, but a controversial decision in the 17th minute could have changed all that. Paul Donnelly was sent off for allegedly elbowing an opposition player to the surprise of the players and Churchill Reserve crowd.

The incident seemed to inspire the visitors, but they were unable to capitalise on their chances, with young striker Evan Papadopoulos fluffing a shot from 8 metres with only the keeper to beat after a goal-mouth scramble.

The Saints were a revitalised unit in the second half and the combination of Trupkovic and Kelic saw them take the lead less than 10 minutes from the restart.

Only two minutes later, Altona had a golden opportunity, as Evan Papadopoulos was again involved, crossing for Jani Suric who could only head the ball wide.

St Albans hit back a minute later as live-wire Ivan Zilic took on three defenders and had his shot from outside the area saved by Sam Frangos, before stealing the ball from Trupkovic's feet on the rebound.

Kelic and Trupkovic both had chances to extend the home side's lead, but Kelic headed over the bar from a Con Sianidis cross, and Trupkovic had his shot expertly saved by Frangos after a thru ball from Sianidis.

Altona's best chance of an equaliser came in the 78th minute, when Peter Griodis tore down the middle of the park, before letting rip with a hard, low shot from edge of area that was tipped away by Marjan Vunderl for a corner keeper tipped 4 corner.

The visitors pressed for the final 10 minutes but were unable to find the elusive equaliser as St Albans held on for yet another victory.

Another positive for the Saints was the appearance of favourite son and former Knights player Slavko Rados, who came on as a late substitute after a long injury layoff.

## GREENS NET SHARKS

| | |
|---|---|
| Port Melbourne | 0 |
| Bentley Green | 2 |

**Bentleigh staged a spectacular smash and grab raid to beat home side Port Melbourne 3-0 at Andersen Reserve last Friday night.**

The game was over at half time, although Port worked hard to mount a comeback after the interval and came close to scoring a couple of times.

Bentleigh coach Gary Cole described his team's three strikes as "great goals" and they were.

Michael Anderson produced a perfect cross from the left that striker Craig Lewis headed straight into the net over Port 'keeper Steve Wardle at the far post after only five minutes.

Former Eastern Pride striker Juan Nilo showed his NSL skills with a devastating goal in the 27th minute. He wrong-footed two Port defenders before striking the net with a lashing left-foot shot.

The game was said and done in the 37th minute, when again Lewis fired a shot on the turn that hit the roof of the net for the final score reached before half time.

It might have worked out differently if the usually accurate Peter Psarros had struck with the score 2-0. Sam Poutakidis crossed to the far post, where Psarros hit the side-netting from an angle.

Bentleigh took the foot off the gas in the second half, allowing Port more possession.

Port chances fell to John Papas, Arthur Tsirtsakis and Psarros, while Gerry McDonaugh saved off the line for Bentleigh.

The Greens could have extended the score after the break, but Sash Markovski headed wide and Wardle pushed a long range shot from Doug Mladenovic over the bar for a corner five minutes into stoppage time.

Cole said the difference between the two sides was three goals and not so much their comparative qualities. "The difference was in the finishing.

There wasn't much between the teams," Cole said. "We scored three great goals, a great header, some great individual stuff and some nice finishing. But you expect that of them (Nilo and Lewis)," Cole said.

Bentleigh, who finished runner up last season, is looking for the double chance in the finals.

"We're aiming for the top two to have the double chance. That has to be our goal. We're good enough to finish in the top two spots," Cole said.

Port coach Harry Chalkitis, who coached Bentleigh previously for several seasons, conceded the Greens had king-hit the Sharks in the first half.

"They killed us off in the first half," Chalkitis said. "On the night their first half was much better than ours. Our second half was better but it was too late by then (to catch up)," he said.

Port will need to rebuild its defence. Richard Watson has gone back to Perth, while Nick Palamaris and Jean Paul Knezevic are injured. Knezevic played against Bentleigh but was obviously struggling.

Bentleigh also ran into injuries. Top spearheads Nilo and Lewis, both went off with injuries.

## League proves competitive

**There's still a long way to go and the league is proving so competitive it's hard to pick a final top five, with St Albans, Port Melbourne, Bentleigh, Heidelberg and Altona East making the early running.**

But Altona East, which finished third last season, has now slumped to its fourth loss in a row after five victories and is in danger of dropping out.

The club hasn't had much luck, running into Green Gully, Bentleigh Greens, Port Melbourne and St Albans in the last four rounds.

Coach Chris Taylor also laments a run of injuries that has cost his side much needed manpower. Steve Bartol, Daniel Genovese, George Pantalidis and Robert Troise have been missing. Nick Papadopoulos also got injured and will be out of a couple of weeks as well.

"We'll just have to pick ourselves up and get it together," Taylor said.

"It's been difficult to play the top sides all at once. It's broken our run," he said.

Taylor said the league was highly competitive with top places wide open.

"Apart from the bottom two teams everyone is after the top five and ten into five doesn't go, so it will be tough," he said.

St Albans is hitting its straps at the moment, while Port Melbourne is struggling defensively but clinging to second spot.

Bentleigh Greens are the biggest threat and with the Saints the current in-form sides. Heidelberg, under coach of the year (with Altona East last season) Peter Ollerton, took off sprinting but has slowed down and is in fourth place now with three losses, five wins and a draw against the Fawkner Blues, who are in seventh place.

Title defender Green Gully is in sixth place and is only a point outside fifth spot.

No-one is prepared to write off Preston, Altona Magic and Bulleen. But the normally fancied sides are in eighth, ninth and tenth position respectively and will need to do a lot of catching up before they are in final five contention.

The bottom two teams Dandenong Thunder and Essendon Royals are early contenders to return to the State League after a season in the top flight.

## • RESULTS •

### ROUND 9

**FRIDAY, 30 MARCH, 8:15PM**

Port Melbourne Sharks 0 — Bentleigh Greens 3
(Craig Lewis 2, Juan Nilo)

**SATURDAY, 31 MARCH, 3:00PM**

Dandenong Thunder 2 — Green Gully Cavaliers 2
(Pino Corallo, David Terek) (George Svigos, S. Martin)

**SATURDAY, 31 MARCH, 7:00PM**

Altona Magic 1 — Preston Lions 1
(Becvinovski S) (Sapazovski J)

**SUNDAY, 1 APRIL, 3:00PM**

St. Albans Saints 1 — Altona East Phoenix 0
(Kelic A)

Fawkner Blues 1 — Heidelberg United 1
(Tsiorlas M) (Own goal (1)

## VIC PREMIER LEAGUE LADDER

### (AFTER ROUND 9)

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **St Albans Saints** | **8** | **6** | **1** | **1** | **14** | **6** | **19** |
| Port Melbourne Sharks | 9 | 6 | 0 | 3 | 22 | 13 | 18 |
| Bentleigh Greens | 9 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 17 | 6 | 17 |
| Heidelberg United | 9 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 10 | 6 | 16 |
| Altona East Phoenix | 9 | 5 | 0 | 4 | 14 | 15 | 15 |
| Green Gully Cavaliers | 9 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 14 | 13 | 14 |
| Fawkner Blues | 9 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 8 | 9 | 11 |
| Preston Lions | 9 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 7 | 11 | 11 |
| Altona Magic | 9 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 10 | 11 | 10 |
| Bulleen Zebras | 7 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 7 | 8 |
| Dandenong Thunder | 9 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 20 | 4 |
| Essendon Royals | 8 | 0 | 1 | 7 | 6 | 19 | 1 |

## Victorian Premier League

## ROUND 10

**SATURDAY, 7 APRIL, 3:00PM**

Essendon Royals vs. Fawkner Blues

**SUNDAY, 8 APRIL, 3:00PM**

Preston Lions vs. Dandenong Thunder

Altona East Phoenix vs. Bulleen Zebras

Bentleigh Greens vs. St. Albans Saints

**SUNDAY, 8 APRIL, 5:00PM**

Heidelberg United vs. Altona Magic

**SUNDAY, 8 APRIL, 6:00PM**

Green Gully Cavaliers vs. Port Melbourne Sharks

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# PREMIER LEAGUE WRAP-UPS By Glenn Davis

**By Glenn Davis**

Rochedale Rovers left a few broken hearts scattered at Dittmer Park after its 5-0 thrashing against Mt Gravatt on Saturday night.

Rochedale served notice they had well and trull woken from their early season slumber scoring all five goals in the opening period to have the match sewn up at half time.

The result further enhanced the reputation of rookie coach Keiran Cooper who has taken the former champions to two wins and a draw in three matches after they lost their opening two games under former coach Peter Bannon.

'Coops' pulled off a master stroke in the previous round by playing Queensland defender Damian Harris up front and the ploy work even better against Mt Gravatt after he scored his first hattrick in senior football.

In their last two matches, Rochedale has not conceded a goal and importantly has banged in nine goals, under the guidance of Cooper who was the league's leading goal scorer for many seasons in his playing days.

While Cooper was thrilled with the result, rival Mt Gravatt coach Mal Bland was left pondering his future after the Hawks were demonised by Rochedale.

"I'm too professsional to do anything rash and I'm being realistic enough to know I'll just have to plug away rather than give it away," Bland said.

"We've got too many decent young palyers at the club to do anything like that.

"The upsetting part is that we've been thrashed 6-2 by Bundaberg and now 5-0 by Rochedale in our last two games.

"We're going through a bad patch and hopefully we'll soon come out of it.

Bland said Mt Gravatt were never in the game from the opening whistle and blamed his players for slopping marking and failing to create chances.

"They got two quick goals which tore us apart just after the start and we didn't compete after that," he said.

Rochedale's opened the scoring in the 10th minute when midfielder Michael Legg scored off a diagonal ball from Cameron Williams in the box.

Harris scored the first of his hattrick with a header five minutes later before slotting home his second midway through the half in to the top corner.

Harris' hattrick came ten minutes before the interval when he received a ball with his back to the Mt Gravatt goal before turning and scoring in clinical fashion.

Rochedale put the final nail in Mt. Gravatt's coffin just before the break when midfielder Brad Ditton came on for the injured Legg and beat two defenders to drive home his side's fifth.

Despite Rochedale's convincing win, Cooper believed Mt Gravatt should not be too disheartened by the result.

"Mt Gravatt battled hard and showed plenty of character in the second half but to be blunt there would not be too many teams in the league which would have stuck with us in the first half," he said.

"Mt. Gravatt are a young side who play for each other and their turn will come against another side."

Wynnum also had a night out on the town at Heath Park with a 6-2 away thrashing over Easts on Saturday night.

Wynnum's goals were shared around by different players, a pleasing factor for coach Peter Tokesi. "We've been going well and scoring planty of goals but we've been relying on just one or two players scoring for us until now.

"I want to get out midfielders into the game to score which we did."

Easts led 1-nil after ten minutes but went to the break trailing Wynnum 4-1 after goals from Josh Rose, Jeff Hurford, Anthony Roche and a penalty from Steve Forshaw.

Reza Aysen and striker Scott Rocker netted two after the interval while Easts' second goal came after referee Calvin Daunt allowed play to go on when keeper Garth McCulloch appeared to be fouled in the box enabling Easts to tap home a dropped ball.

*Peter Tokesi: Wynnum coach.*

Tokesi was disappointed at times with his side's sloppy defensive work in the first half and was thankful Easts couldn't capitalise.

"Easts could have come back at us and scored three goals as we were a bit lazy at the back," Tokesi said.

"Scoring six goals put us up there among the top scoring clubs but it's silly goals we're conceding which is a worry."

In other games, Ipswich Knights picked up a valuable point in a 2-2 draw with leaders Brisbane City who played a man down for most of the game at Spencer Park.

Ipswich coach Frank Pimblett was disappointed his side didn't come away with maximum points after midfielder Peter Hinks scored both goals for his side while Damien Waugh also landed a double for Brisbane City.

Brisbane City had to battle hard after having midfielder Alan Cameron sent off for punching under the nose of the referee after only 20 minutes.

"It was a good result on face value a point against the top-side Brisbane City but we should have won and we virtually lost two points," Pimblett said.

At Jack Speare Park, Pine Rivers picked up only their second point of the season in a 1-1 draw against Taringa Rovers, Bundaberg downed Toowoomba 2-0 at home while Brisbane Lions missed a chance to go to the top of the table allowing Gold Coast to come from behind to snatch a 1-1 draw at Lions Stadium.

## QUEENSLAND PREMIER LEAGUE

**FIXTURES ROUND 6**

**Saturday 7th April**

| | |
|---|---|
| Rochedale Rovers v Taringa Rovers | 7.00pm |
| TBA Raiders v Mt Gravatt | 7.00pm |
| Gold Coast v B'berg Waves | 7.00pm |
| Wynnum v Brisbane City | 7.00pm |
| Pine Rivers v Eastern Suburbs | 7.00pm |

**Sunday 8th April**

| | |
|---|---|
| IPSW Knights v Brisbane Lions | 2.45pm |

## XXXX LEAGUE

| | P | W | D | L | GF | GA | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Brisbane City | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 15 | 7 | 11 |
| Brisbane Lions | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 15 | 8 | 11 |
| Wynnum | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 14 | 7 | 11 |
| B'berg Waves | 5 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 14 | 12 | 9 |
| Rochedale Rovers | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 13 | 6 | 7 |
| IPSW Knights | 5 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 10 | 9 | 6 |
| Taringa Rovers | 4 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 5 |
| Gold Coast City | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 11 | 4 |
| T'wmba Raiders | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 10 | 4 |
| Mt Gravatt | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 12 | 19 | 4 |
| Eastern Suburbs | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 14 | 4 |
| Pine Rivers Utd | 5 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 18 | 2 |

**ROUND 5**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Brisbane City | 2 | IPSW Knights | 2 |
| Brisbane Lions | 1 | Gold Coast City | 1 |
| B'berg Waves | 2 | T'wmba Raiders | 0 |
| Taringa Rovers | 1 | Pine Rivers Utd | 1 |
| Eastern Suburbs | 2 | Wynnum | 6 |
| Mt Gravatt | 0 | Rochedale Rovers | 5 |

## DIVISION 1 XXXX RESERVES

| | P | W | D | L | GF | GA | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rochedale Rovers | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 2 | 15 |
| Brisbane City | 5 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 20 | 7 | 12 |
| Brisbane Lions | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 14 | 5 | 10 |
| Taringa Rovers | 4 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 9 |
| Gold Coast City | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 8 | 5 | 7 |
| Wynnum | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 10 | 9 | 7 |
| Mt Gravatt | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 10 | 7 |
| Eastern Suburbs | 5 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 6 |
| B'berg Waves | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 10 | 4 |
| T'wmba Raiders | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 4 |
| IPSW Knights | 5 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 6 | 17 | 3 |
| Pine Rivers Utd | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 15 | 0 |

**ROUND 5**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Brisbane City | 10 | IPSW Knights | 0 |
| Brisbane Lions | 1 | Gold Coast City | 1 |
| B'berg Waves | 0 | T'wmba Raiders | 0 |
| Taringa Rovers | 3 | Pine Rivers Utd | 2 |
| Eastern Suburbs | 0 | Wynnum | 1 |
| Mt Gravatt | 0 | Rochedale Rovers | 3 |

## DIVISION 1 XXXX YOUTH

| | P | W | D | L | GF | GA | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wynnum | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 12 | 8 | 13 |
| Brisbane Lions | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 18 | 1 | 12 |
| Sunshine Coast | 5 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 18 | 9 | 12 |
| Taringa Rovers | 4 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 13 | 5 | 9 |
| Rochedale Rovers | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 7 |
| IPSW Knights | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 11 | 12 | 7 |
| T'wmba Raiders | 5 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 8 | 18 | 6 |
| Gold Coast City | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 4 |
| Brisbane City | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 8 | 13 | 4 |
| Pine Rivers Utd | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 10 | 4 |
| Eastern Suburbs | 5 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 10 | 2 |
| Mt Gravatt | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 6 | 14 | 0 |

**ROUND 5**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Brisbane City | 3 | IPSW Knights | 3 |
| Brisbane Lions | 5 | Gold Coast City | 1 |
| Sunshine Coast | 5 | T'Wmba Raiders | 1 |
| Taringa Rovers | 4 | Pine Rivers Utd | 0 |
| Eastern Suburbs | 2 | Wynnum | 2 |
| Mt Gravatt | 1 | Rochedale Rovers | 3 |

## DIVISION 1 SEMI PRO

| | P | W | D | L | GF | GA | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Slacks Creek | 6 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 20 | 9 | 15 |
| The Gap | 6 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 14 | 6 | 13 |
| North Star | 6 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 15 | 8 | 12 |
| Redlands Utd | 6 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 16 | 9 | 11 |
| Brisbane Olympic Utd | 6 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 14 | 8 | 11 |
| Albany Creek | 6 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 11 | 8 | 11 |
| Rocklea Utd | 6 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 10 | 9 | 11 |
| Souths Utd | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 11 | 8 | 10 |
| Capalaba | 6 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 11 | 8 |
| Mitchelton | 6 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 7 | 11 | 6 |
| Grange Thistle | 6 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 6 | 11 | 3 |
| Newmarket | 5 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 7 | 14 | 3 |
| Acacia Ridge | 6 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 16 | 1 |
| North Pine | 6 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 4 | 18 | 0 |

**ROUND 6**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Albany Creek | 2 | The Gap | 1 |
| Capalaba | 1 | Acacia Ridge | 0 |
| Grange Thistle | 1 | North Star | 2 |
| Rocklea Utd | 2 | Mitchelton | 0 |
| Newmarket | 2 | Slacks Creek | 3 |
| Redlands Utd | 2 | Souths Utd | 3 |
| North Pine | 1 | Brisbane Olympic Utd | 3 |

## DIVISION 1 SEMI PRO Reserves

| | P | W | D | L | GF | GA | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Souths Utd | 6 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 22 | 6 | 18 |
| Redlands Utd | 6 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 15 | 9 | 15 |
| North Star | 6 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 12 | 6 | 14 |
| Mitchelton | 6 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 15 | 8 | 10 |
| Slacks Creek | 6 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 12 | 6 | 10 |
| Newmarket | 6 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 13 | 13 | 9 |
| The Gap | 6 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 13 | 9 | 8 |
| Albany Creek | 6 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 9 | 8 | 8 |
| Rocklea Utd | 6 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 17 | 20 | 7 |
| Capalaba | 6 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 8 | 14 | 6 |
| Grange Thistle | 6 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 8 | 18 | 6 |
| North Pine | 6 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 12 | 17 | 4 |
| Brisbane Olympic Utd | 6 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 13 | 21 | 3 |
| Acacia Ridge | 6 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 4 | 18 | 3 |

**ROUND 6**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Albany Creek | 0 | The Gap | 2 |
| Capalaba | 3 | Acacia Ridge | 1 |
| Grange Thistle | 1 | North Star | 2 |
| Rocklea Utd | 2 | Mitchelton | 3 |
| Nemarket | 1 | Slacks Creek | 0 |
| Redlands Utd | 0 | Souths Utd | 5 |
| North Pine | 4 | Brisbane Olympic Utd | 1 |

## DIVISION 1 SEMI PRO Youth

| | P | W | D | L | GF | GA | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Souths Utd | 6 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 35 | 7 | 18 |
| Capalaba | 6 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 28 | 8 | 15 |
| Acacia Ridge | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 23 | 3 | 13 |
| Newmarket | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 11 | 11 | 10 |
| Mitchelton | 6 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 14 | 14 | 9 |
| Redlands Utd | 6 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 14 | 14 | 8 |
| Rocklea Utd | 6 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 11 | 14 | 8 |
| North Pine | 6 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 17 | 13 | 7 |
| Albany Creek | 6 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 13 | 11 | 7 |
| The Gap | 6 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 18 | 19 | 6 |
| Slacks Creek | 6 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 10 | 23 | 6 |
| Grange Thistle | 6 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 11 | 24 | 3 |
| Brisbane Olympic Utd | 5 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 6 | 25 | 3 |
| North Star | 5 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 10 | 35 | 3 |

**ROUND 6**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Albany Creek | 4 | The Gap | 1 |
| Capalaba | 1 | Acacia Ridge | 5 |
| Grange Thistle | 3 | North Star | 5 |
| Rocklea Utd | 3 | Mitchelton | 1 |
| Newmarket | 2 | Slacks Creek | 1 |
| Redlands Utd | 3 | Souths Utd | 4 |
| North Pine | 9 | Brisbane Olympic Utd | 1 |

# NSW Youth League Results

## SUPER LEAGUE

**FIRST GRADE: Fairfield Bulls 6** (M Borg 4m P Badolato 37/43m K Jacobson 46m P Richardson 56m M Hoenselaars 87m) **MSC Liverpool 2** (C Green 69m Own Goal 83m), **Manly Warringah Dolphins 2** (A Griffiths 13m K Foster 75m Penalty) **Stanmore Hawks 1** (E Briscoe 43m), **Macarthur Rams 2** (Z Younan 31m E Williams 59m) **Hurstville City 3** (M Kladis 80m E Petratos 84/87m).

**GRADE 21:** Fairfield Bulls 1 MSC Liverpool 0, Manly Warringah Dolphins 1 Stanmore Hawks 1, Macarthur Rams 3 Hurstville City 0.

**GRADE 18:** Fairfield Bulls 3 MSC Liverpool 3, Manly Warringah Dolphins 5 Stanmore Hawks 0, Macarthur Rams 2 Hurstville City 0.

## SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE

**GRADE 13:** Manly Warringah Dolphins 1 Marconi Stallions 1, Fairfield Bulls 0 Bankstown City Lions 4, Macarthur Rams 3 Sydney United 0 (Forfeit), Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 1 Blacktown City Demons 9, Wollongong Wolves 2 Northern Spirit 1, Central Coast Coasties 1 St George 0, Penrith Panthers 0 Sutherland Shire 2, Sydney Olympic 2 Canterbury Marrickville 1, Leichhardt Tigers 1 Newcastle United 1, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1 Parramatta Eagles 2.

**GRADE 14:** Manly Warringah Dolphins 1 Marconi Stallions 3, Fairfield Bulls 0 Bankstown City Lions 2, Macarthur Rams 4 Sydney United 1, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 1 Blacktown City Demons 4, Wollongong Wolves 0 Northern Spirit 2, Central Coast Coasties 2 St George 0, Penrith Panthers 3 Sutherland Shire 3, Sydney Olympic 8 Canterbury Marrickville 0, Leichhardt Tigers 1 Newcastle United 0, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 2 Parramatta Eagles 1.

**GRADE 15:** Manly Warringah Dolphins 1 Marconi Stallions 4, Fairfield Bulls 0 Bankstown City Lions 2, Macarthur Rams 0 Sydney United 0, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 1 Blacktown City Demons 8, Wollongong Wolves 0 Northern Spirit 4, Central Coast Coasties 3 St George 0, Penrith Panthers 1 Sutherland Shire 0, Sydney Olympic 3 Canterbury Marrickville 1, Leichhardt Tigers 1 Newcastle United 2, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1 Parramatta Eagles 2.

**GRADE 17:** Manly Warringah Dolphins 2 Marconi Stallions 4, Fairfield Bulls 1 Bankstown City Lions 3, Macarthur Rams 0 Sydney United 3, Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 1 Blacktown City Demons 7, Wollongong Wolves 1 Northern Spirit 3, Central Coast Coasties 2 St George 2, Penrith Panthers 2 Sutherland Shire 0, Sydney Olympic 3 Canterbury Marrickville 1, Leichhardt Tigers 2 Newcastle United 1, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 2 Parramatta Eagles 2.

## SUPER CADET LEAGUE

**GRADE 11:** Central Coast Coasties 2 St George 3, Penrith Panthers 0 Sutherland Shire 0, Sydney Olympic 2 Canterbury Marrickville 1, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0 Parramatta Eagles 6.

**GRADE 12:** Central Coast Coasties 1 St George 0, Penrith Panthers 0 Sutherland Shire 1, Sydney Olympic 5 Canterbury Marrickville 0, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1 Parramatta Eagles 1.

# WOLLONGONG NEWS

**By Otto Bader**

WOLVES' youngster, another local junior JACOB TIMPANO is aiming for stardom abroad. The 15 year-old Illawarra product came up through the Wolves junior ranks, now with the NSW Institute of Sport, is travelling to Italy next month to play in a U/17 tournament.

Timpano, a defender, travels to Sydney twice and sometimes to training sessions in addition plus games on weekends. He hopes to make the Australian Joeys' squad (U/17s). Illawarra Regional Coach Glen Fontana predicts a bright future for the youngster, having watched his development.

Wolves' Card Threat — Stopper George Souris and midfielder Dino Menillo cannot afford to pick up another yellow card. Both face two weeks suspension being send off previously this season.

Striker Scott Chipperfield is suspended at present and following his selection in the Socceroos squad for the upcoming Oceania world Cup qualifiers, in Coffs Harbour, could be missing for a month, threatening the Wolves' chances to make one of the top spots on the table.

**SCOTT CHIPPERFIELD** has been picked for the Socceroos squad to take part in the Oceania World Cup qualifying tournament to be held soon in Coffs Harbour.

He will be missed by his team for several crucial forthcoming matches. However the door suddenly opens for a suitable replacement to be selected.

Chipperfield recently gained further recognition when awarded the MERCURY — NOVOTEL NORTHBEACH SPORTSTAR contest for the month of February.

His team won the January award — carrying with it a fantastic monthly prize of a luxury night for two at the NOVOTEL NORTHBEACH including a deluxe breakfast and dinner for two in the Windjammers restaurant for the person nominating the winner correctly as well a valuable prize for Chipperfield himself.

The nominee has to be a local sportsperson or team. Chipperfield also won, along with his team, the 2000 MERCURY-NOVOTEL Northbeach Sportstar award of the year, and was named NSL Player of the year. Not bad for a local soccer player. He aims for a chance to play overseas soon.

**WOLVES LOST GROUND** with penultimate Friday's loss to South Melbourne and a draw away at Adelaide City.

In both games, opportunities that came the Wolves' way however were not converted into goals. It will be a struggle for the team to maintain one of the top two or three spots.

They just cannot afford to waste chances in front of goal as the strikers are most-certainly aware of. Even if decisions may be going against general play, the boys have to show discipline and strong commitment. In both games the Wolves had enough possession according to Coach Ron Corry to make it count.

With four games to go, the Wolves are five points behind the leaders. Coach Ron Corry is not pressing the panic button yet, believing in positive-thinking and his coaching experience in handling difficult situations. The fans always come out in numbers at the WIN STADIUM and surely will support their team on the run home.

**WOLVES CUBS** — a good weekend result playing against Bankstown Demons at Jenson Park= Cadets U/11s won 6:0 and U/12s won 1:0. The Youth League U/13s won 4:2, U/14s won 2:0, U/15s drew 3:3 and U/17s drew 1:1, both teams wasting chances to collect three points.

**ILLAWARRA JUNIORS** are preparing for another huge soccer season with trials being held all over the South Coast, from Helensburgh to Kiama including the Highlands.

In 2000 the League Champions were in the U/10s first division THIRROUL, 2ND DIV. PORT KEMBLA, 3RD DIV. CORRIMAL, 4TH DIV. CONISTON, 5TH DIV. WARILLA.

In the U/11s divisions ALBION PARK, CORRIMAL, OAK FLATS, BERKELEY AND SHELLHARBOUR.

In the U/12s divisions CONISTON, CORRIMAL, FIGTREE AND BALGOWNIE.

In the U/13s divisions UNANDERRA, WOLLONGONG, SHELLHARBOUR, UNANDERRA.

In the U/14s divisions OAK FLATS, LAKE HEIGHTS, UNANDERRA. In the U/15s divisions UNANDERRA, ALBION PARK, THIRROUL.

In the U/16s divisions UNANDERRA, ALBION PARK.

In the U/18s division OAK FLATS. In the Girls divisions the winners were U/14s PORT KEMBLA, U/16S WONOONA, U/18S WOONONA.

**BAMPTON CUP @ YOUTH CUP RESULTS** — CRINGILA LIONS narrowly over UNIVERSITY 2:1 and youth grade CRINGILA V RUSE 9:0 WARILLA WANDERERS over SOUTH COAST 2:1. BARBARIANS LOST AT HOME 2:4 V HIGHLANDS, youth grade lost 0:5 to WOLLONGONG OLYMPIC.

NORTHERN UNITED BEAT ILLAWARRA UNITED 6:1, youth grade NORTHERN V SHOALHAVEN CITY 0:1, CONISTON V RUSE 9:0, YOUTH CONISTON V PORT KEMBLA 0:1. KEMBLAWARRA V SHOALHAVEN CITY 6:0, YOUTH KEMBLAWARRA V HELENSBURGH 1:0. DAPTO V ALBION PARK W.E. 1:6, YOUTH DAPTO V ILLAWARRA UNITED 7:0. WESTERN SUBURBS V TARRAWANNA 3:2, YOUTH TARRAWANNA V HIGHLANDS 5:0 and WESTERN SUBURBS V UNIVERSITY 5:4 ON PENALTIES.

KIAMA V BALGOWNIE 1:2, YOUTH KIAMA V ALBION PARK 3:0. BELLAMBI V FERNHILL 3:4, YOUTH BELLAMBIE V BALGOWNIE 0:14. BERKELEY V WOLLONGONG OLYMPIC 1:4 ON PENALTIES.

YOUTH FERNHILL V SOUTH COAST UNITED 2:0. LYSAGHTS V PICTON 2:0, YOUTH LYSAGHTS V WONOONA 3:0. BULLI V WONOONA 7:1.

Round two will be played on Sunday 22nd April 2001.

*Alvin Ceccoli: Wollongong Wolves' hardworking playmaker.*

**REFEREES PUZZLE — DAVID ROWEN** (President Referees Association) reports that at a recent FIFA meeting in EDINBURGH, England, a decision was made not to caution players with a yellow card for taking the shirt off celebrating.

Another proposal to pay referees on a similar level as players, was placed in the too hard basket, wonder why.

**REFEREES QUIZ** — passed on by local whistle blowers = May Goal Posts be painted in home team colours or any other than white? Answer Yes/No? (NO).

**ICU PREMIER LEAGUE** — round 2 Saturday 7th April PREVIEW = WOLLONGONG OLYMPIC V LYSAGHS — the home team favoured. KEMBLAWARRA V WESTERN SUBURBS — both strong sides, maybe draw.

SHOALHAVEN CITY V NORTHERN UNITED — both not expected to reach great heights. PORT KEMBLA V PICTON RANGERS — the home team to win. CRINGILA V BULLI — difficult to pick. CONISTON V BALGOWNIE — could go either way.

**ICU FIRST DIVISION PREVIEW** — BARBARIANS V ILLAWARRA UNITED — favours home side. FERNHILL V RUSE — favours home team. BERKELEY V ALBION PARK W.E. — assume a visitor win. SHELLHARBOUR CITY V TARRAWANNA — visitors look too strong. WARILLA WANDERERS V DAPTO — expect a home win.

SOUTH COAST UNITED V WONOONA — open for both. KIAMA V UNIVERSITY — dangerous for the home side. BELLAMBI V HELENSBURGH — two tough sides, the host looks good.

**GOALKEEPER TRAINING** — director of goalkeeping coaching John Krajnovic, phone 42836135.

Specialised intense training for goal keepers, available to all Illawarra Junior Soccer clubs.

**SHELLHARBOUR CITY SOCCER CLUB GOLF DAY** — on Sunday 29th April, run as a 4-person AMBROSE EVENT — at Shellharbour Golf Course, nominate your team quick either at the Golf Club or Secretary Craig Hannan,

Phone 42572128 — entry fees $30. per person includes breakfast, lunch, prizes, complementary drinks, tee-off 7.30 am — great fun.

# NSW Premier League

**VALENTINE SPORTS PARK**
**235-257 Meurants Lane, Glenwood 2768 • Phone (02) 9629 1800**

NSW Premier League

## PRELIMINARY FINAL

# DEMONS HAUNT EAGLES TO MAKE FINAL

| | |
|---|---|
| **Blacktown City** | **2** |
| **Parramatta Eagles** | **0** |

***By Greg Stock***

**A week is a very long time in football. Just ask Blacktown coach Brian Brown.**

Last Sunday week, Brown watched his side capitulate to arch rivals Bonnyrigg in the Major Semi-Final.

But exactly seven days later, Brown was on hand to watch his side dispose of a gallant Parramatta Eagles and book themselves a rematch with Bonnyrigg in the Premier League Grand Final.

Prefering to start ex Green Gully striker Zlatko Donev in place of Jimmy Aschner the Demons midfield looked strong, but in the early exchanges the best chances fell the way of Parramatta.

With the nippy Jimmy Bakis fully recovered from a leg injury the Eagles had a focal point on the forward line, and with Daniel Kukucka proving to be the perfect foil, the Eagles had two clear cut chances in the first fifteen minutes. But for all their endeavour, neither strike was good enough to trouble Demons goalkeeper John Crawley.

It was not until the 36th minute that the scoreboard attendant was troubled when Steven Riches turned in a Paul Dee corner. There was little flamboyance in the shot, but quite simply, Dee directed his corner inch perfect for the left footed Riches to make no mistake with his drive.

The second goal took a little longer for Blacktown to muster. With the Eagles midfield continually creating chances, the early part of the second half was all Parramatta.

Try as they might, Blacktown looked to be stuck in first gear as Cummins, Borg and Bazdaric attempted to take control of the match. But as the half wore on and the number of Eagles misses mounted, it was clear that the overall class and skill of the Blacktown side was starting to take its toll.

*Bonnyrigg White Eagles: The team to beat in Sunday's NSW Premier League Grand.*

Introducing midfielder Josh Maguire for the final 18 minutes Demons coach Brian Brown knew his side were well poised to strike.

With the Eagles continually pushing forward looking for an equaliser the opportunity was right. With just four minutes of time remaining, Maguire turned provider when he slipped a beautiful ball in behind the Eagles defence for substitute striker Jim Aschner to run onto.

One on one with Eagles goalkeeper Jason Holmes, Aschner made no mistake sending his right foot shot crashing into the net and Blacktown were through to the Grand Final.

# NSW SUPER LEAGUE

## ROUND 2

### Fairfield 6 M.S.C. Liverpool 2

The Fairfield Bulls marked their first home game of the season with a dominant display over the hapless M.S.C.

Liverpool. A 10-minute blitz just before half-time sealed the visitorsí fate in a game that highlighted the attacking qualities of John Turner's men. The faithful Nineveh fans were all witness to this team's devastating form with a 6-2 victory, oozing with class and quality.

### Manly Warringah 2 Stanmore Hawks 1

The Manly-Warringah Dolphins made it two from two last Saturday night, with a calculated 2-1 victory over the Stanmore Hawks at Cromer Park.

The Dolphins got off to a flyer - netting as early as the 13th minute of play with livewire striker Adam Griffiths blasting home from a rebound just outside Stanmore's area.

The scores were levelled on the stroke of half time by Eddie Briscoe, however Kelvin Foster stepped up in the second half to ensure the win for Manly, scoring from the spot for a 2-1 end result.

### Macarthur Rams 2 Hurstville City 3

The Hurstville City Minotaurs miraculously defeated the Macarthur Rams after being down by two goals with only 10 minutes remaining. The Rams scored the first two goals when Zia Younan found an open goal from a Richard Harrison cross in the 31st minute and Eric Williams managed to blast one past keeper Stacy Alogdellis in the 59th minute.

Hurstville then unleashed three devastating blows late in the game to take the points.

Michael Kladis converted a penalty from a handball in the 80th minute, and Evangelos Petratos headed in a double in the 84th and 87th minutes leaving the Rams substitute keeper Chad Taylor in dismay.

### Dulwich Hill 3 Bankstown City 2

Dulwich Hill met Bankstown at Arlington Oval and got a shock when the Lions led 2-0, the first coming from George Issa in the 30th and the second from Ben Shrimpton in the 59th.

The home side clawed their way back, first through a well taken Eric Hristodoulou free kick in the 65th and then with a header from Eddie Wong after 69 minutes, before Peter Apolevski gave them the lead in the 81st which they clung onto until the finish.

### Rockdale City 3 Fraser Park Jets 2

Rockdale City Suns entertained neighbours Fraser Park in a typical derby and raced to a 3-0 half time lead. Spase Najdoski scored in the 27th minute after a build up which saw a Leo Carle shot deflected off a defender and sit up nicely for the Rockdale skipper.

New signing Carle finished off a move a minute later, which had seen Antony Adamo break on the right and lay a square pass.

An own goal from former player Anthony Trieste made it 3-0 as the defender attempted to head clear froma Najdoski cross.

Fraser Park's two half time substitutes Steve Lombardo and Hans Sevgin then put the visitors back in contention. with two headed goals.

Rockdale however managed to hold on nicely for the 3-2 win.

### AC United 1 Hajduk Wanderers 3

Hajduk Wanderers put the disappointment of last week's home loss behind them when they met AC United at Abruzzi

Field today. For Hajduk, Jason Vella and Adrian Macerola scored twice early on and an own goal made it three.

AC United's sole response came from Nenos Bobos, when Hajduk was 2-0 up, but being competitive was not to prove enough and the side could make no further impact on the scoresheet.

## • FIXTURES •

**ROUND 3**

**Bankstown City Lions v Rockdale City Suns**
7 April — Jensen Park, 7.00pm
**Fairfield v Dulwich Hill**
7 April — Nineveh Field, 7.00pm
**Fraser Park Jets v Macarthur Rams**
8 April — Fraser Park, 3.00pm
**Hurstville City v Manly Warringah**
8 April — St George Stadium, 5.00pm
**Stanmore Hawks v AC United**
8 April — Arlington Oval 3.00pm
**MSC Liverpool v Hajduk Wanderers**
8 April — Hammondville Oval, 3.00pm

## NSW SUPER LEAGUE LADDER

**(AFTER ROUND 2)**

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Manly Warringah** | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 6 |
| **Dulwich Hill** | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 3 | 6 |
| **Rockdale City Suns** | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 6 |
| **Fairfield Bulls** | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 3 |
| **Macarthur Rams** | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| Bankstown City Lions | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Hiville City Minotaurs | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Hajduk Wanderers | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| AC United | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 1 |
| MSC Liverpool | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 1 |
| Fraser Park | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 0 |
| Stanmore Hawks | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 0 |

For further information see: www.nswpremierleague.com

NSW Premier League

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GRAND FINAL

SUNDAY 8th APRIL
MARCONI STADIUM,
BOSSLEY PARK
FIRST-GRADE • 5PM

BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES
V
BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS

UNDER-19 • 3PM
Blacktown City v Leichhardt Tigers

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# 2002 WORLD CUP: The Qualifiers

Manuel Rui Costa: Mercurial Portuguese playmaker, whose skills have helped place his country in a strong position to qualify.

## EUROPE

### GROUP ONE

Switzerland .....5 Luxembourg .....0
Slovenia .....1 Yugoslavia .....1
Russia .....1 Faroe Islands .....0

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Russia | 4 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 10 |
| Switzerland | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 13 | 5 | 8 |
| Slovenia | 5 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 8 | 7 | 7 |
| Yugoslavia | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 5 |
| Faroe Islands | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 8 | 4 |
| Luxembourg | 5 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 14 | 0 |

### GROUP TWO

Andorra .....0 Ireland .....3
Portugal .....2 Netherlands .....2
Cyprus .....2 Estonia .....2

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ireland | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 12 | 3 | 11 |
| Portugal | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 11 | 4 | 11 |
| Netherlands | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 13 | 6 | 8 |
| Cyprus | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 10 | 12 | 7 |
| Estonia | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 8 | 7 |
| Andorra | 7 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 3 | 22 | 0 |

### GROUP THREE

Bulgaria .....4 Northern Ireland .....3
Czech Republic .....0 Denmark .....0

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Czech Republic | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 11 |
| Bulgaria | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 10 | 6 | 10 |
| Denmark | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 9 | 3 | 9 |
| Northern Ireland | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 4 |
| Iceland | 4 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 3 |
| Malta | 4 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 9 | 1 |

### GROUP FOUR

Moldova .....0 Sweden .....2
Slovakia .....3 Azerbaijan .....1
Macedonia .....1 Turkey .....2

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Slovakia | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 7 | 2 | 11 |
| Turkey | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 7 | 3 | 11 |
| Sweden | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 11 |
| Macedonia | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 4 |
| Moldova | 5 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 5 | 2 |
| Azerbaijan | 5 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 8 | 1 |

### GROUP FIVE

Belarus .....2 Norway .....1
Poland .....4 Armenia .....0
Wales .....1 Ukraine .....1

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Poland | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 13 | 4 | 13 |
| Belarus | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 6 | 10 |
| Ukraine | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 6 | 8 |
| Wales | 5 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 4 |
| Armenia | 5 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 11 | 2 |
| Norway | 5 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 7 | 2 |

### GROUP SIX

Scotland .....4 San Marino .....0

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Scotland | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 10 | 3 | 11 |
| Belgium | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 16 | 3 | 8 |
| Croatia | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 5 |
| Latvia | 4 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 3 |
| San Marino | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 17 | 0 |

### GROUP SEVEN

Austria .....2 Israel .....1
Liechtenstein .....0 Bosnia .....3

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spain | 4 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 10 | 2 | 10 |
| Austria | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 5 | 3 | 8 |
| Israel | 4 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 6 |
| Bosnia | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 4 |
| Liechtenstein | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 11 | 0 |

### GROUP EIGHT

Georgia .....0 Romania .....2
Italy .....4 Lithuania .....0

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Italy | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 13 | 2 | 13 |
| Romania | 4 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 6 |
| Hungary | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 9 | 4 | 5 |
| Georgia | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 |
| Lithuania | 5 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 16 | 1 |

### GROUP NINE

Albania .....1 England .....3
Greece .....2 Germany .....4

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Germany | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 3 | 12 |
| England | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 7 |
| Finland | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| Albania | 4 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 3 |
| Greece | 4 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 3 |

***Note:*** *Nine group winners automatically qualify for finals.*

*The nine runners-up go into a draw with eight playing each other over two legs and the ninth playing off against an Asian team over two legs for a place in the finals.*

## SOUTH AMERICA

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Argentina | 11 | 9 | 1 | 1 | 27 | 8 | 28 |
| 2. Paraguay | 11 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 19 | 9 | 23 |
| 3. Brazil | 11 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 21 | 10 | 20 |
| 4. Ecuador | 11 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 13 | 14 | 19 |
| 5. Colombia | 11 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 10 | 7 | 18 |
| 6. Uruguay | 11 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 12 | 8 | 15 |
| 7. Peru | 11 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 10 | 14 | 11 |
| 8. Chile | 11 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 12 | 16 | 10 |
| 9. Bolivia | 11 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 16 | 9 |
| 10. Venezuela | 11 | 1 | 0 | 10 | 6 | 33 | 3 |

**Top four qualify for the World Cup in 2002. Fifth team plays-off against the winners of the Oceania region.*

## CONCACAF

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. United States | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 6 |
| 2. Costa Rica | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 4 |
| 3. Mexico | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| 4. Jamaica | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 3 |
| 5. Honduras | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 1 |
| 6. Trinidad | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 0 |

**Top three teams qualify for the 2002 World Cup.*

## NEXT MATCHES

**● GROUP 1**
**April 25**
Yugoslavia v Russia
**June 2**
Russia v Yugoslavia
Faroe Islands v Switzerland
Slovenia v Luxembourg
**June 6**
Switzerland v Slovenia
Luxembourg v Russia
Faroe Islands v Yugoslavia

**● GROUP 2**
**April 25**
Netherlands v Cyprus
Ireland v Andorra
June 2 - Ireland v Portugal
Estonia v Netherlands
June 6 - Estonia v Ireland
Portugal v Cyprus

**● GROUP 3**
**April 25**
Malta v Iceland
**June 2**
Iceland v Malta
Northern Ireland v Bulgaria
Denmark v Czech Republic
**June 6**
Iceland v Bulgaria
Denmark v Malta
Czech Rep. v Nthn Ireland

**● GROUP 4**
**June 2**
Turkey v Azerbaijan
Macedonia v Moldova
Sweden v Slovakia
**June 6**
Turkey v Macedonia
Sweden v Moldova
Azerbaijan v Slovakia

**● GROUP 5**
**June 2**
Armenia v Belarus
Wales v Poland
Ukraine v Norway
**June 6**
Norway v Belarus
Ukraine v Wales
Armenia v Poland

**● GROUP 6**
**April 25**
Latvia v San Marino
**June 2**
Croatia v San Marino
Belgium v Latvia
**June 6**
Latvia v Croatia
San Marino v Belgium

**● GROUP 7**
**April 25**
Austria v Liechtenstein
**June 2**
Spain v Bosnia
Liechtenstein v Israel
**June 6**
Israel v Spain

**● GROUP 8**
**June 2**
Romania v Hungary
Georgia v Italy
June 6 - Lithuania v Romania
Hungary v Georgia

**● GROUP 9**
**June 2**
Greece v Albania
Finland v Germany
**June 6**
Greece v England
Albania v Germany

# RONALDO RETURNS WITH GOALS' GALORE

**Brazilian striker Ronaldo, playing alongside Formula One world champion Michael Schumacher, passed his latest fitness test with five goals in a charity match last week.**

Ronaldo, 24, showed no ill-effects in his first game following an 11-month injury lay-off.

More than 40,000 fans came to the Maracana Stadium to watch Ronaldo terrorise his opponents, mostly made up of retired players and television actors, with a series of powerful runs and deft flicks.

After a cautious start, Ronaldo scored twice before the interval and capped his performance with a second-half hat-trick.

The two-time World Player of the Year underwent surgery to reconstruct knee ligaments last April and was recently given the go-ahead to resume full training.

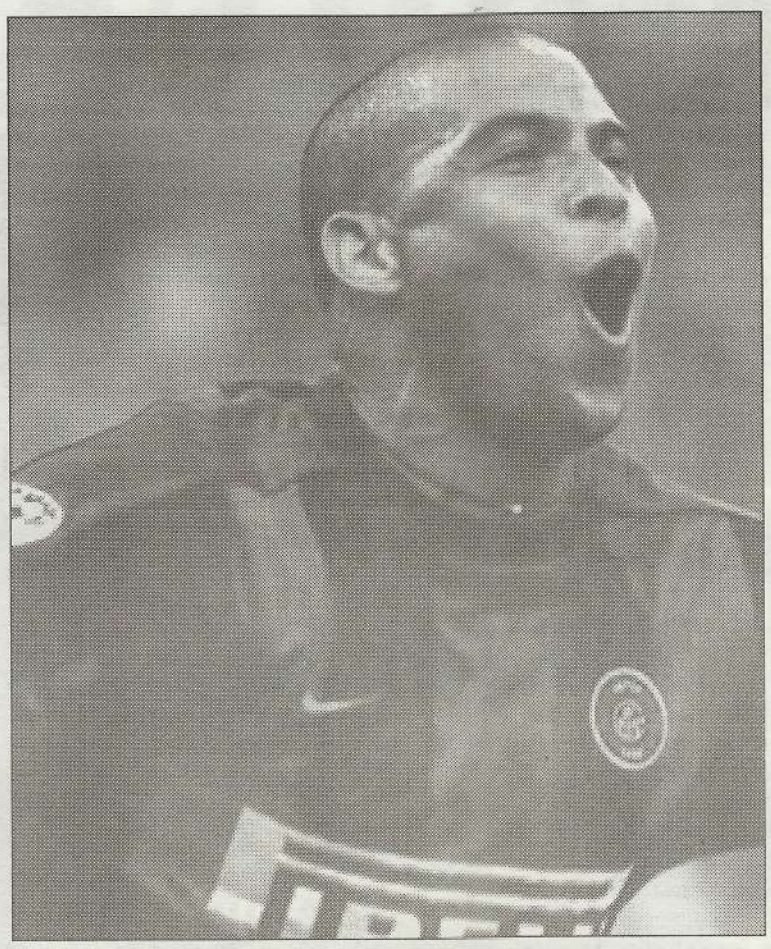
"It was great fun playing alongside Schumacher," Ronaldo said.

"He by no means looked out of place. We even worked on some neat one-twos together."

The Inter Milan player admitted the game had been little more than a kick-about, but said it had still provided a valuable test of his fitness.

Although he was happy with his form, Ronaldo wouldn't set a date for his competitive comeback.

"There's no timetable or deadline. I'll be back when I'm ready and not before," he said.



*Ronaldo: On the path to full recovery from injury.*

# British press hail Eriksson

**Widely-criticised after being named England coach in November, Sven Goran Eriksson is being universally praised by the media for reviving the national team.**

*Goran Eriksson*

England's 3-1 World Cup qualifying victory over Albania last Wednesday was greeted with headlines like: "With Sven in charge we're back on the road to Japan" (The Sun) and "Ice cool Sven is right on the money" (The Mirror).

They were in stark contrast to criticism the English Football Association faced after naming the Swede as England's first foreign coach.

Former England defender Jack Charlton, who managed the Republic of Ireland despite having no family connections with the country, described the appointment as "a recipe for disaster".

"I think it's a terrible mistake," he told newspapers in November. "The French are managed by a Frenchman, the Germans have a German in charge and the Italians have one of their own. Who have we got? Someone who has never managed in this country before."

English players' union representative Gordon Taylor said: "I think there will be tears at the end of the day — I just can't see it working out."

Four months and three wins later — over Spain, Finland and Albania — opinions are changing.

"Sven Goran Eriksson is earning every penny of his salary," The Mirror said. "The cool and calculating Swede has made all the right moves in conjuring up a maximum of six World Cup points in just five days."

*Sol Campbell: Injury hit.*

# Campbell may miss FA Cup

**Tottenham Hotspur defender Sol Campbell is doubtful for the FA Cup semi-final against Arsenal after being injured in England's World Cup qualifying win against Albania, Spurs' official Clubcall said.**

Campbell, in the midst of transfer negotiations with Premier League Tottenham, was taken off after 29 minutes of Wednesday's 3-1 win in Tirana with an ankle injury.

Clubcall said Campbell had ruled himself out of Tottenham's league game against Arsenal last weekend and was "doubtful" for this weekend's semi-final at Old Trafford.

# VOELLER GETS NEW CONTRACT

**Rudi Voeller is now officially the German head coach until the 2002 World Cup.**

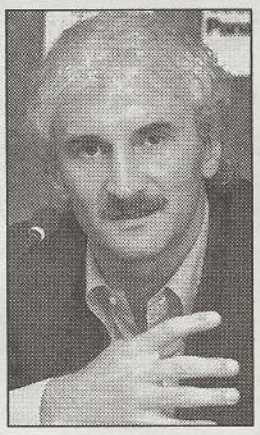
The 40-year-old signed a contract last week making him the team's coach until after next year's finals in Japan and South Korea.

"It was merely a formality," said German Football Association (DFB) spokesman Wolfgang Niersbach.

Voeller was appointed on a caretaker basis after Erich Ribbeck stepped down following Germany's exit form Euro 2000 in the group stage.

The popular former World Cup striker then accepted to stay on until 2002 after Christoph Daum, who had been due to take over this year, was discarded following a positive drugs test.

Had Daum not been ruled out, Wednesday's 4-2 win over Greece would have been Voeller's last game in charge.



*Rudi Voeller*

Under Voeller's guidance, Germany won their first four World Cup qualifiers and are now ideally placed to make it to the 2002 finals.

Voeller's assistant Michael Skibbe also signed a contract which ties him with the DFB until 2004. Apart from being Voeller's deputy, Skibbe will be responsible for coordinating the promotion of young talent in German football.

# Hoddle quits Southampton for Spurs

**Former England manager Glenn Hoddle will cut short his contract at Southampton and return to his spiritual home at Tottenham Hotspur.**

Hoddle, who scored 132 goals in 566 matches with Tottenham during a 12-year career starting in 1975, decided after secret talks last week to rejoin his old club following the sacking of George Graham.

The decision was announced by Southampton chairman Rupert Lowe on the club's official website. Lowe, making no secret of his disappointment, said Hoddle had phoned him the previous night to say he wished to quit Southampton immediately.

"I was also disappointed that Glenn had chosen to turn his back on the club that gave him the opportunity to resume his career in top-flight management and on a squad that he had welded into an exciting team and who in return have given them their unconditional loyalty as evidenced by the stream of recent contract extensions.

A statement from Tottenham confirmed the club was holding talks with Hoddle.

"A further announcement will be made when appropriate," he said.

Hoddle's decision to quit Southampton and replace Graham follows secret talks with his old club earlier in the day.

The manager's job fell vacant after the club's new owners ENIC dismissed Graham only three weeks before their FA Cup semi-final against their old north London rivals Arsenal.

Hoddle has been a controversial figure in England soccer both as player and manager.

He scored on his England debut against Bulgaria in 1979 but did not always display on the international stage the exquisite ball skills he regularly revealed in the midfield for Tottenham.

He joined Chelsea as player-manager in 1993 and was a popular choice to succeed Terry Venables,another former Spurs coach, as England coach after Euro 96.

# NEW MADRID CONTRACT THRILLS DEL BOSQUE

**Real Madrid coach Vicente Del Bosque has said he is honoured by the club's decision to extend his contract until June 2003.**

"It gives me great satisfaction that they have put their trust in me while we are in the middle of the season with two titles still to play for," Del Bosque was quoted as saying in the Spanish press.

The mild-mannered Real coach said negotiations with the club's sporting director Jorge Valdano had been concluded without a hitch. "The negotiations were very straightforward. The only condition I made was that I wanted to continue with the same team of coaches that I have at present."

Del Bosque, who is Real's 11th coach in the past 10 seasons, said the decision to extend his contract was a reflection of the club's desire to avoid the uncertainty of previous years.

"It is important that your work is valued and that the club functions in a stable environment," he said.

Real's players greeted the news that Del Bosque was staying as coach with enthusiasm.

"I am really pleased," Brazilian international Roberto Carlos said. "He never seeks the limelight but the fact that things are going so well this season is down to him."

Spanish international striker Raul also praised a man who has been involved with the club for over 30 years.

# FRENCH COACH DOWNPLAYS SPANISH DEFEAT

**France coach Roger Lemerre played down his team's 2-1 friendly defeat to Spain when the World Cup holders and European champions returned home.**

Spain ended France's 10-match unbeaten run with a 2-1 win in Valencia last week — their first triumph over France for over 20 years.

"For me, the loss against Spain was no more or less significant than the 5-0 win over Japan last weekend," Lemerre told reporters.

"The time we were together enabled me to see and judge the players and to assemble information about their physical and mental wellbeing.

"It is never easy to administer these get-togethers but the players made a big effort and overall I am satisfied."

Lemerre said Spain were deserving winners but criticised their defensive tactics.

"There is no doubt that Spain deserved their victory," he said. "We had the chances to put Spain into trouble, but we didn't take them.

"In the end, our motivation was less than that of the Spaniards. I'm not criticising the referee, but it was sad to see. We expected Spain to play with great willpower, but not like that."

# WORLD

## RUSSO WRITES

**By Joe Russo**

Marcello Lippi, Arrigo Sacchi, Sven Goran Eriksson and Alberto Zaccheroni all have something in common as coaches. They have all won at least one Serie A title.

This year they have something else in common as well - they all failed to see out the season as Serie A coaches. Sacchi and Lippi combined made up only four rounds!

Zdenek Zeman, Alberto Malesani, Fatih Terim and, now, Gigi De Canio have departed their posts as well this season. You can add in possibly Carlo Mazzone and Emiliano Mondonico to that list in the not too distant future.

Eight coaches gone and two more very likely is a sad indictment on Italian football.

Gigi De Canio two weeks ago was sacked as coach of Udinese and replaced by ex-Sampdoria and ex-Empoli coach, Luciano Spalletti.

De Canio was in charge for nearly three years and left saying that he still loved Udinese as a club, he still thanked the club President and still loved the fans. A true gentleman in a non-gentlemanly sport at times.

Football in Italy can very cruel indeed if you are a coach.

Spalletti for the record was sacked at Sampdoria a few years ago only to be replaced mid-season by David Platt who in turn was sacked after a few games and Spalletti was called back in.

De Canio two weeks ago, Zaccheroni the week before and Terim the week before that. It is a never-ending saga. So who will it be this week? And next week?

Speculation is rife that Mazzone will be sacked from Brescia. Mazzone has coached many Serie A clubs including Roma, Ascoli, Napoli, Cagliari, Perugia and Bologna and left a great impression at most places he went to.

A first class gentleman him too.

When his team Brescia played Roma at the Olympic Stadium in Rome a few weeks ago, he was given the warmest of receptions by the Roma fans. He later acknowledged, very modestly, that it was because he was a Roman and a lifelong Roma supporter because he didn't achieve anything when he coached Roma for three years.

Mazzone is loved by all except, it seems, by Brescia fans that have booed him and are putting pressure on the club to sack him. Maybe the fans should look at their squad and see the limited resources he has to work with.

Roberto Baggio and Dario Hubner are the only two real players that Mazzone has.

It was interesting to hear that at the recent derby between Atalanta and Brescia both sets of fans actually booed Mazzone. It seems that 'internal' racism is still rife in Italian football. By 'internal' I mean that some Northern Italian club supporters still object to someone from Central or Southern Italy at their club.

Mondonico at Napoli is also in the hot seat. He was loved at first after he took over from Zeman but now that things are not as good as first thought, the locals are getting restless and the tide is starting to turn against him.

Napoli has always been a difficult team to work with because fans expect so much. Once again it is an ordinary team.

The last time Napoli were in the Serie A a few years ago they used four coaches in one season.

●●●●

Roma has been fined approximately $A35 000 for their players protesting against a refereeing decision during their recent UEFA Cup clash with Liverpool.

Players surrounded the referee after he appeared to change his mind regarding awarding a penalty decision to Roma.

In short, the decision was poor. However, it doesn't condone the player protest either.

So what is the solution? The video referee. Just like in cricket. People say that it can't happen because you couldn't get a video referee to all games including junior soccer. Nonsense.

In which sport does a video referee appear at all levels of the sport?

Sometimes in junior soccer you don't even have linesmen or a properly marked field!

However, at the highest levels where millions of dollars are at stake and there are linesmen and properly marked fields, and spectators enjoy the best facilities, then too should there be a video referee. Simply put, at the highest levels one expects the best.

The refereeing, scrutinised especially in the Serie A by video technology on Sunday night television programmes, should be aided by a video referee.

Let us not bury our heads in the sands any longer and deny that we are living in 2001. Sadly, video technology in football is already 20 years overdue.

# ITALIAN SERIE A

### ATALANTA 1 NAPOLI 1

Fabio Pecchia burst through a gaping hole in the Atalanta defence to put Napoli ahead in the first half before Cristiano Doni scored Atalanta's equaliser from a penalty awarded for a fiercely contested handball decision.

It was Atalanta's fourth consecutive home draw and Napoli's first point in six straight away matches.

### JUVENTUS 1 BRESCIA 1

Roberto Baggio's 86th minute equaliser dented Juve's title prospects. Baggio rounded keeper Edwin Van der Sar to stroke home his 167th Serie A goal after Gianluca Zambrotta had put Juventus ahead with a superb volley from 25 metres in the 30th minute.

Juve forward Alessandro Del Piero and Brescia striker Dario Hubner both hit the woodwork before the interval. Juventus had won their previous five home matches in the league.

*Fiorentina's Rui Costa (right) and Vicenza's Lamberto fight for the ball.*

### PARMA 0 BOLOGNA 0

Abrasive Reggio Emilia derby in which Paolo Cannavaro, younger brother of Italy defender Fabio, was sent off for a second bookable offence.

Fine performances from Bologna keeper Gianluca Pagliuca and opposite number Gianluigi Buffon, who has now gone 367 minutes unbeaten at Parma's Tardini stadium. Parma stay fourth.

### PERUGIA 2 INTER MILAN 3

Christian Vieri's first hat-trick in 18 months gave Inter a boost in their bid to secure a Champions League berth.

Vieri scored his first with a header, his second with his right foot and his third with his left. Inter had French defender Laurent Blanc sent off in the 48th minute with the score at 1-1. Perugia hit the woodwork late on before Greek Zisis Vryzas grabbed what proved to be a consolation goal in injury time.

*AC Milan's Tomas Helveg evades the tackles off a Lazio defender.*

### REGGINA 1 UDINESE 1

Reggina goalkeeper Massimo Taibi scored an 88th minute equaliser to give his struggling side a point.

Taibi, who joined the Reggina attack in a desparate final bid to save the match, met a corner kick with an unstoppable header at the near post.

Brazilian defender Alberto had given Udinese a 68th minute lead.

### AS ROMA 3 VERONA 1

Roma had to come from behind for a victory which lifts them nine points clear of Juventus at the top of Serie A.

Argentine midfielder Mauro Camoranesi gave the visitors a shock lead before two headed goals from Vincenzo Montella in the 55th and 68th and Gabriel Batistuta's 15th league strike of the season secured Roma's victory.

### BARI 3 LECCE 2

A vital win for bottom club Bari in the Puglia derby.

Striker Paolo Poggi scored the decisive goal deep in injury time after Lecce's Croatian Davor Vugrinec and Bari's Swedish forward had grabbed two apiece. Bari remain bottom while Lecce are in mid-table.

### VICENZA 1 FIORENTINA 1

Rui Costa scored 15 minutes from time to salvage a point for Fiorentina and give coach Roberto Mancini his third draw in three matches since his took over from Turk Fatih Terim.

Vicenza, flirting with relegation, took the lead on 10 minutes when Fiorentina's Czech defender Tomas Repka deflected a Vincenzo Sommese shot into his own net.

### AC MILAN 1 LAZIO 0

Zvonimir Boban's goal in the 59th minute was one of the few highlights of a cagey match at the San Siro. The Croat arrived at the edge of the box to meet a Francesco Coco cross with a firm header wich beat Angelo Peruzzi at his right hand post.

Lazio defender Paolo Negro wasted a glaring chance to equalise in the 87th when he missed an open goal from no more than five metres.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Atalanta | 1 | Napoli | 1 |
| Juventus | 1 | Brescia | 1 |
| AC Milan | 1 | Lazio | 0 |
| Parma | 0 | Bologna | 0 |
| Perugia | 2 | Inter Milan | 3 |
| Reggina | 1 | Udinese | 1 |
| AS Roma | 3 | Verona | 1 |
| Bari | 3 | Lecce | 2 |
| Vicenza | 1 | Fiorentina | 1 |

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. AS Roma** | **24** | **18** | **4** | **2** | **47** | **18** | **58** |
| 2. Juventus | 24 | 14 | 7 | 3 | 41 | 20 | 49 |
| 3. Lazio | 24 | 14 | 4 | 6 | 44 | 27 | 46 |
| 4. Parma | 24 | 11 | 7 | 6 | 38 | 21 | 40 |
| 5. Atalanta | 24 | 9 | 10 | 5 | 29 | 20 | 37 |
| 6. Inter Milan | 24 | 10 | 7 | 7 | 32 | 28 | 37 |
| 7. AC Milan | 24 | 9 | 9 | 6 | 38 | 35 | 36 |
| 8. Bologna | 24 | 9 | 6 | 9 | 29 | 29 | 33 |
| 9. Perugia | 24 | 8 | 7 | 9 | 30 | 33 | 31 |
| 10. Fiorentina | 24 | 6 | 12 | 6 | 38 | 34 | 30 |
| 11. Udinese | 24 | 9 | 2 | 13 | 37 | 41 | 29 |
| 12. Lecce | 24 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 31 | 38 | 29 |
| 13. Vicenza | 24 | 6 | 6 | 12 | 23 | 35 | 24 |
| 14. Verona | 24 | 6 | 6 | 12 | 29 | 44 | 24 |
| 15. Napoli | 24 | 5 | 8 | 11 | 24 | 36 | 23 |
| 16. Brescia | 24 | 4 | 10 | 10 | 26 | 36 | 22 |
| 17. Reggina | 24 | 5 | 5 | 14 | 18 | 37 | 20 |
| 18. Bari | 24 | 5 | 4 | 15 | 21 | 43 | 19 |

# WORLD

# ENGLISH PREMIERSHIP

*Manchester United defender, Wes Brown (left) attempts to stop Liverpool striker, Emile Heskey during their top-of-the-bill clash at Anfield.*

## MAN. CITY 1 ASTON VILLA 3

City look doomed after their 10th home defeat of the season.

Shaun Goater put City ahead after 12 minutes but Paul Merson tucked in the equaliser two minutes later.

In a game littered with errors, City keeper Nicky Weaver made the pick of them when he allowed a Spencer Prior backpass to roll between his legs, enabling Dion Dublin to tap in his first goal since December just before halftime.

After Mark Kennedy then missed a sitter for City in the second half an unmarked Lee Hendrie completed Villa's win in the 65th minute.

City's fans greeted their impending return to division one by singing "cheerio".

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Charlton Athletic | 2 | Leicester City | 0 |
| Arsenal | 2 | Tottenham Hotspur | 0 |
| Bradford City | 2 | Newcastle United | 2 |
| Chelsea | 2 | Middlesbrough | 1 |
| Coventry City | 2 | Derby County | 0 |
| Liverpool | 2 | Manchester United | 0 |
| Manchester City | 1 | Aston Villa | 3 |
| Sunderland | 0 | Leeds United | 2 |
| West Ham United | 0 | Everton | 2 |

| | P | W | L | D | F | A | PTS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Manchester United | 31 | 21 | 7 | 3 | 68 | 21 | 70 |
| 2. Arsenal | 31 | 16 | 9 | 6 | 49 | 29 | 57 |
| 3. Leeds United | 31 | 14 | 8 | 9 | 46 | 38 | 50 |
| 4. Liverpool | 29 | 14 | 7 | 8 | 50 | 31 | 49 |
| 5. Ipswich | 30 | 15 | 4 | 11 | 44 | 36 | 49 |
| 6. Sunderland | 31 | 13 | 9 | 9 | 37 | 32 | 48 |
| 7. Chelsea | 30 | 12 | 9 | 9 | 54 | 38 | 45 |
| 8. Charlton | 31 | 12 | 9 | 10 | 41 | 42 | 45 |
| 9. Leicester | 30 | 13 | 6 | 11 | 31 | 33 | 45 |
| 10. Southampton | 29 | 12 | 8 | 9 | 34 | 34 | 44 |
| 11. Aston Villa | 30 | 10 | 11 | 9 | 34 | 31 | 41 |
| 12. Tottenham Hotspur | 31 | 10 | 9 | 12 | 36 | 40 | 39 |
| 13. Newcastle United | 30 | 11 | 6 | 13 | 36 | 43 | 39 |
| 14. West Ham United | 31 | 8 | 11 | 12 | 35 | 40 | 35 |
| 15. Everton | 31 | 9 | 8 | 14 | 33 | 44 | 35 |
| 16. Derby County | 31 | 8 | 11 | 12 | 31 | 47 | 35 |
| 17. Middlesbrough | 31 | 6 | 13 | 12 | 34 | 38 | 31 |
| 18. Manchester City | 31 | 6 | 9 | 16 | 34 | 52 | 27 |
| 19. Coventry City | 31 | 6 | 9 | 16 | 28 | 51 | 27 |
| 20. Bradford City | 30 | 3 | 9 | 18 | 22 | 57 | 18 |

## ARSENAL 2 HOTSPUR 0

The dress-rehearsal for next week's FA Cup semi-final lacked the usual passion of a north London derby but Arsenal were in control for most of it.

Glenn Hoddle, who is set to take over as Spurs manager on Monday, watched from the stands but had little to cheer.

After a series of near misses, Robert Pires cut in from the left and fired in a right-foot shot past Neil Sullivan in the 70th minute.

Thierry Henry skipped through the Spurs defence for an excellent second three minutes from time.

## BRADFORD 2 NEWCASTLE 2

Bradford found themselves 2-0 up after 10 minutes thanks to a David Wetherall effort and a Robbie Blake penalty.

Carl Cort pulled one back with a 25th minute header and after Newcastle laid siege to the home goal Clarence Acuna scrambled in a deserved equaliser in the 77th minute.

## CHELSEA 2 M'BROUGH 1

Gianfranco Zola guided in a header to put Chelsea ahead after 35 minutes but Dean Windass headed the equaliser on his debut in the 54th minute.

But Middlesbrough were punished after a woeful backpass by Noel Whelan that allowed Eidur Gudjohnsen to run clear and score the winner in the 63rd minute.

## LIVERPOOL 2 MAN. UNITED 0

Liverpool completed the double over United for the first time in 22 years thanks to first half goals by Steven Gerrard, from 30 metres, and Robbie Fowler.

Liverpool were outstanding in the first half and could have had more goals and then sat back to defend in the last 20 minutes after midfielder Danny Murphy was sent off.

## SUNDERLAND 0 LEEDS UTD 2

This was a key game for two clubs with Champions League qualification hopes but 10-man Leeds took the honours to move up to third.

Alan Smith headed Leeds ahead in the 33rd minute after Sunderland had made all the early running.

Kevin Phillips, playing without strike partner Niall Quinn, went close for Sunderland before Smith, who had been sailing close to the edge all afternoon, was sent off for a second booking 20 minutes from time.

But Mark Viduka ensured three points for Leeds with a breakaway goal in the last minute.

## COVENTRY 2 DERBY COUNTY 0

Mustapha Hadji headed in a rebound after a John Eustace shot had been blocked to put Coventry ahead just before halftime. A John Hartson header from a corner shortly after the break then sealed Coventry's first win of the year.

Hadji was sent off for spitting in the 71st minute but Coventry held out to keep their slim survival hopes alive.

## WEST HAM UTD 0 EVERTON 2

A David Unsworth penalty put Everton ahead just before the break after an incident that saw Stuart Pearce receive a red card for a second booking.

Niclas Alexandersson then added his first goal for Everton in the 71st minute to earn a win that could well mean Premier League survival for Walter Smith's side.

## CHARLTON 2 LEICESTER 0

A first-half header by Andy Todd and a brilliant late volley by South African striker Shaun Bartlett settled this uninspiring mid-table battle.

The result lifted Charlton into eighth place above Leicester on goal difference and was Leicester's eighth successive away defeat.

• *Southampton v Ipswich Town were billed to play last night.*

## Apology

*Dear Readers,*

*Your regular column Murphy's Law is absent this week due to unforeseen circumstances.*

*It will however return as usual next week.*

*Leeds United striker, Mark Viduka tussles with Sunderland defender, Jody Craddock.*

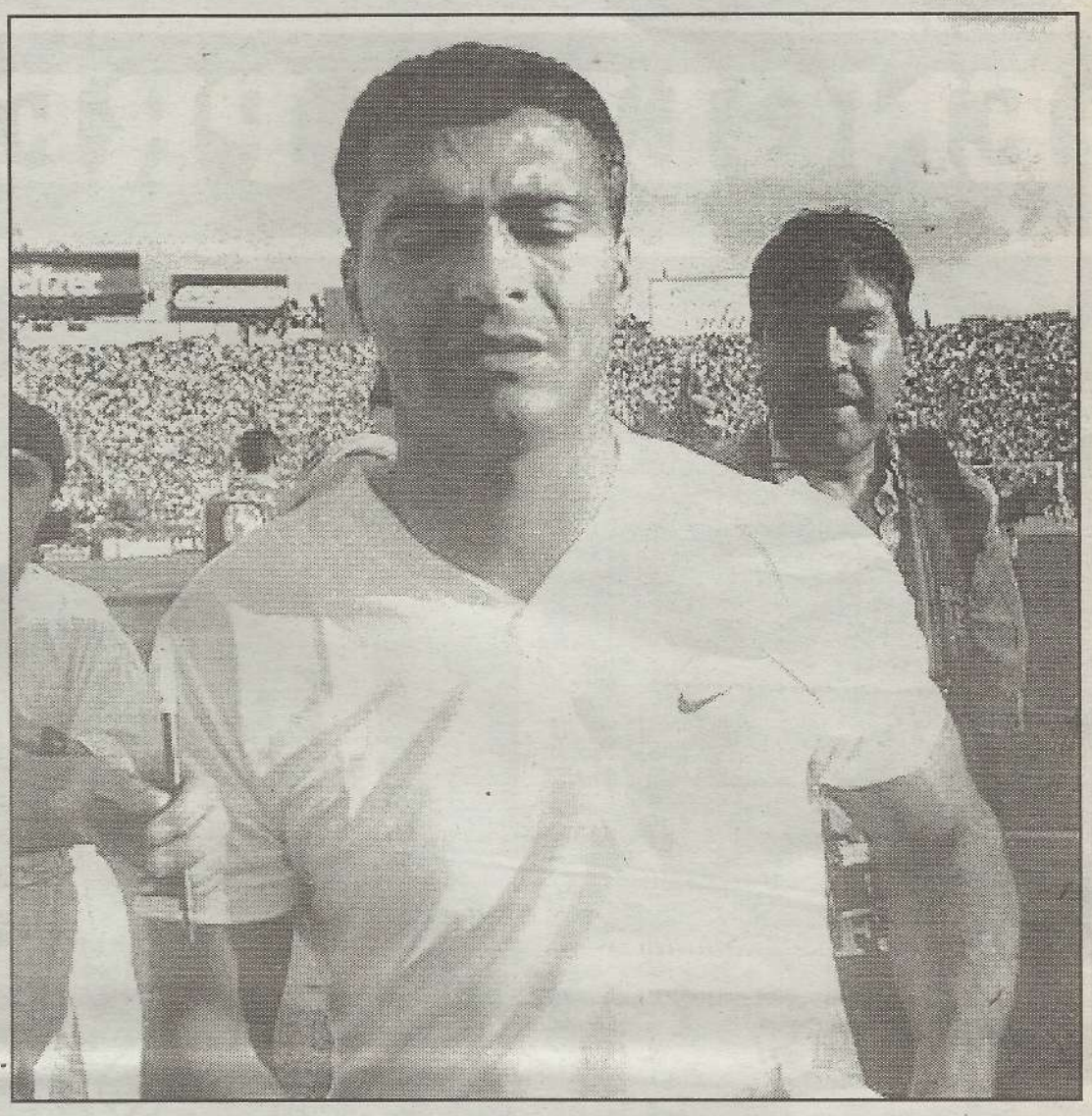
# WORLD

## FIFA World Rankings

(Valid until April 11)

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Brazil | 814 | 70 | Burkina Faso | 494 | 139 | St Kitts & Nevis | 277 |
| 2 | France | 797 | 71 | Macedonia FYR | 492 | 140 | St Lucia | 275 |
| 3 | Argentina | 771 | 72= | Congo DR | 488 | 141 | Korea DPR | 267 |
| 4 | Portugal | 738 | 72= | Uzbekistan | 488 | 142 | Luxemburg | 265 |
| 5 | Italy | 735 | 74 | Bosnia-Her | 487 | 143 | Bangladesh | 262 |
| 6 | Czech Republic | 734 | 75= | Albania | 476 | 144 | Tanzania | 260 |
| 7 | Spain | 727 | 75= | **AUSTRALIA** | 476 | 145 | Ant and Barbuda | 248 |
| 8 | Paraguay | 703 | 77 | China PR | 475 | 146 | Andorra | 245 |
| 9 | Netherlands | 702 | 78 | Liberia | 474 | 147 | Benin | 243 |
| 10 | Yugoslavia | 701 | 79 | Guinea | 473 | 148 | Grenada | 242 |
| 11 | Germany | 698 | 80 | Cuba | 471 | 149 | Liechtenstein | 240 |
| 12 | Mexico | 684 | 81 | Algeria | 470 | 150 | Botswana | 232 |
| 13 | Romania | 680 | 82 | Iraq | 469 | 151 | Sri Lanka | 226 |
| 14 | Norway | 670 | 83 | Togo | 468 | 152 | Dominican Rep | |
| 15 | Colombia | 667 | 84 | Senegal | 461 | 153 | Dominica | 220 |
| 16 | England | 659 | 85 | El Salvador | 459 | 154 | Bermuda | 217 |
| 17 | Croatia | 656 | 85 | Qatar | 459 | 155 | Maldives | 216 |
| 18 | United States | 655 | 87 | Namibia | 458 | 156 | Gambia | 214 |
| 19 | Russia | 639 | 88 | Haiti | 456 | 157 | Cape Verde Is | 209 |
| 20 | South Africa | 631 | 89 | Lithuania | 453 | 158 | Eritrea | 196 |
| 21 | Sweden | 629 | 90 | Congo | 451 | 159 | Palestine | 194 |
| 22 | Chile | 623 | 91 | Latvia | 449 | 160 | Cayman Islands | 193 |
| 23 | Slovakia | 620 | 92 | New Zealand | 446 | 161= | Kyrgyzstan | 188 |
| 24 | Denmark | 619 | 93 | Armenia | 440 | 161= | Yemen | 188 |
| 25 | Saudi Arabia | 617 | 94 | Gabon | 438 | 163 | Mauritania | 187 |
| 26 | Belgium | 615 | 95 | Vietnam SR | 437 | 164 | Chinese Taipei | 185 |
| 27 | Tunisia | 612 | 96 | Northern Ireland | 433 | 165= | Chad | 173 |
| 28 | Scotland | 606 | 97 | Moldova | 426 | 166 | Surinam | 172 |
| 29 | Turkey | 605 | 98 | Indonesia | 425 | 167 | Laos | 170 |
| 30 | Morocco | 602 | 99 | Belarus | 423 | 168 | San Marino | 167 |
| 31 | Trin & Tobago | 597 | 100 | Mali | 420 | 169 | British Virgin Is. | 166 |
| 32 | Poland | 595 | 101 | Oman | 413 | 170 | Nepal | 165 |
| 33 | Egypt | 594 | 102= | Singapore | 411 | 171 | Vanuatu | 163 |
| 33 | Uruguay | 594 | 102= | Syria | 411 | 172 | Cambodia | 157 |
| 35 | Ireland Republic | 590 | 104 | Uganda | 408 | 173 | Cook Islands | 156 |
| 36 | Cameroon | 587 | 105 | Jordan | 407 | 174 | Samoa | 139 |
| 37 | Iran | 586 | 106 | Kenya | 406 | 175 | Netherlands Ant | 133 |
| 38 | Ukraine | 584 | 107 | Barbados | 404 | 176 | Cent African Rep. | 127 |
| 39 | Korea Republic | 582 | 108 | Malaysia | 400 | 177 | Guinea-Bissau | 125 |
| 40 | Slovenia | 581 | 109 | Wales | 383 | 178 | Bahamas | 116 |
| 41 | Israel | 576 | 110 | Lebanon | 382 | 179= | Macao | 115 |
| 42 | Japan | 575 | 111 | Venezuela | 375 | 179= | Philippines | 115 |
| 43 | Jamaica | 570 | 112 | Madagascar | | 179= | Sao Tome e Principe | 115 |
| 44 | Greece | 568 | 113 | Malawi | 362 | 182 | Niger | 106 |
| 45 | Austria | 567 | 114 | Bahrain | 360 | 183 | Guyana | 104 |
| 46 | Cote d' Ivoire | 564 | 115= | Libya | 359 | 184 | Aruba | 100 |
| 47 | Hungary | 560 | 115= | Mozambique | 340 | 185 | Tonga | 98 |
| 48 | Peru | 555 | 117 | Azerbaijan | 346 | 186 | Belize | 92 |
| 49 | Bulgaria | 553 | 118 | Mauritius | 342 | 187 | Equatorial Guinea | 90 |
| 49 | Honduras | 553 | 119 | Faroe Islands | 332 | 188 | Mongolia | 89 |
| 51 | Zambia | 552 | 120 | Sudan | 327 | 189 | Seychelles | 83 |
| 52 | Nigeria | 545 | 121 | Malta | 322 | 190 | Djibouti | 79 |
| 53 | Ecuador | 543 | 122 | Kazakhstan | 321 | 191 | Pakistan | 72 |
| 54= | Angola | 541 | 123 | Panama | 316 | 192 | Nicaragua | 71 |
| 54= | Iceland | 541 | 124 | India | 312 | 193 | PNG | 65 |
| 56 | Costa Rica | 539 | 125 | Hong Kong | 308 | 194 | Darussalam | 64 |
| 57 | Finland | 535 | 126 | Myanmar | 306 | 195 | Puerto Rico | 63 |
| 58 | Guatemala | 529 | 127 | Burundi | 305 | 196 | Somalia | 59 |
| 59 | Ghana | 526 | 128 | Swaziland | 304 | 197 | Anguilla | 58 |
| 60 | Switzerland | 525 | 129 | Turkmenistan | 303 | 198 | US Virgin Islands | 33 |
| 61 | Thailand | 521 | 130 | St Vincent/Gr | 300 | 199 | Guam | 29 |
| 62 | Cyprus | 516 | 131 | Rwanda | 298 | 200 | Turks and Caicos Islands | 22 |
| 63 | Canada | 511 | 132 | Lesotho | 290 | 201 | Bhutan | 15 |
| 64 | UAE | 507 | 133 | Fiji | 289 | 202 | Montserrat | 11 |
| 65 | Zimbabwe | 506 | 134= | Sierra Leone | 288 | 203 | American Samoa | 8 |
| 66= | Bolivia | 503 | 134= | Solomon Is. | 288 | | | |
| 66= | Georgia | 503 | 136 | Tahiti | 286 | | | |
| 66= | Kuwait | 503 | 137 | Ethiopia | 280 | | | |
| 69 | Estonia | 502 | 138 | Tajikistan | 279 | | | |

***Note:** Teams inactive since 1991 and teams which have not played yet do not appear in the table.*



*Romario looks dejected as he leaves the pitch in Quito after Brazil's surprise loss to Ecuador.*

# Brazil wakes up to harsh, new reality

**Brazilians awoke last week last week, wondering whether it had all been a bad dream. They quickly realised that the previous day's 1-0 World Cup qualifier defeat to Ecuador was simply part of a harsh new reality.**

In the golden days of Garrincha, Pele and Zico, Brazil used to brush aside the lesser South American teams, using matches against Bolivia, Ecuador and Paraguay to show off their skills.

Last week Wednesday's events at Quito's Atahualpa stadium provided the final proof that those days are over as Ecuador, whose past results against Brazil included 9-1, 9-2 and 7-1 defeats, beat the four-times world champions for the first time in 22 attempts.

Far from fearing Brazil, Ecuador had boldly predicted victory from the outset with their Colombian coach Hernan Dario Gomez claiming: "Wednesday will be a different day for Ecuador."

Brazil had only lost one World Cup qualifier before the current competition began a year ago. Now they have lost three times in 11 outings after earlier defeats away to Paraguay and Chile.

"I preferred the old days," said television commentator Galvao Bueno, whose career behind the microphone began when Brazil were still feared and respected.

"I have to say this is hard to stomach," he said as Ecuador passed the ball around to chants of "Ole" from an ecstatic 40,000 crowd.

"Brazil lost, which is becoming the norm. No surprise," said Juca Kfouri, an outspoken columnist in the sports daily Lance.

The newspaper's headline, "Just Venezuela left", referred to the fact that the baseball-playing nation is the only one in South America against which the Brazilians can still boast an unbeaten record.

Brazilians blame the demise on a variety of reasons; deep-rooted mismanagement of the sport, money, alleged greed and lack of effort on the part of the players, the exodus of leading players abroad, lack of time for training and a negative approach by domestic coaches.

Coach Emerson Leao admitted he was disappointed with his players. "Some didn't produce everything they are capable of," he said. "Some didn't produce 50 percent of what they are capable of."

His comments appeared to be aimed at Rivaldo, substituted after 63 minutes of a performance which earned him three out of 10 in Lance's analysis.

## RONALDO TO THE RESCUE

Brazilians now cling to the possibility that injury-stricken striker Ronaldo will return to action this year as if it were the only hope of a return to greatness.

On Wednesday, Ronaldo took part in a charity kick about at the Maracana stadium. No tackling was allowed and the opposition consisted of veteran players and television celebrities. But the fact that Ronaldo scored five goals in a 10-9 win was seen as a ray of hope.

On the other side of the Amazon jungle, the outcome was greeted with unbridled joy.

Thousands took to the streets of Quito and Guayaquil to celebrate the finest moment in Ecuador's sporting history.

Celebrations were fuelled by the prospect that Ecuador could now qualify for their first World Cup.

President Gustavo Noboa sent his congratulations and coach Gomez described the moment as the high point of his football career. The country came to a standstill during the game and the Guayaquil daily El Universo published a picture of a deserted Congress on its website. "The honorable members went to watch the game," it said.

# WORLD

# WORLD RESULTS ... WORLD RESULTS ...

## FRENCH CUP

### NANTES INCH NEAR TREBLE

*Sonny Anderson, Lyon captain and goal poacher.*

**French first division side Nantes remained on course for a domestic treble as they beat Auxerre 4-1 in extra time in the French Cup quarter-finals last Saturday.**

After a goalless first half, Auxerre striker Djibril Cisse put the visitors ahead in the 53rd minute, surging past Nestor Fabbri and rounding Nantes goalkeeper Mickael Landreau to slot home.

The lead was a short-lived one though, as Fabbri scored the equaliser for the home side just five minutes later.

Nantes secured the victory with a three-goal salvo deep into the extra period, with Nicolas Laspalles firing home after 114 minutes and Marama Vahirua scoring twice in the last four minutes.

Second to Lille on goal difference in the league, Nantes are also through to the semifinals of the League Cup, and are hoping to become only the third team to win the French Cup three times in succession.

Amiens beat fellow third division side Stade Reims 1-0 in last Saturday's other quarter-final. Peter Sampil netted the winner.

Troyes reached the last four by defeating third division Grenoble 4-2 on Friday.

Strasbourg beat first division rivals Olympique Lyon 3-0 with a stunning late flourish in the last quarter-final of the French Cup on Sunday.

The home side finally broke the deadlock in the 78th minute, with the first of three fine goals from Pascal Johansen, Danijel Ljuboja and Pegguy Luyindula.

### QUARTER FINALS

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Strasbourg | 3 | Olympique Lyon | 0 |
| Nantes | 4 | AJ Auxerre | 1 |
| Amiens (III) | 1 | Stade Reims (III) | 0 |
| Grenoble (III) | 2 | Troyes | 4 |

## GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

### DORTMUND CLOSE GAP

**Borussia Dortmund moved to within a point of German first division leaders Bayern Munich last Sunday by crushing Kaiserslautern 4-1.**

The away victory lifted the 1997 European champions to second place just behind Bayern, who slumped to a 3-2 defeat at home to Werder Bremen on Saturday.

Striker Fredi Bobic opened the scoring in the 33rd minute for the Ruhr Valley club, who took control in the second half with goals from Otto Addo, Lars Ricken and Joerg Heinrich.

Kaiserslautern were already 2-0 down when Czech striker Vratislav Lokvenc scored the hosts' only goal in the 58th minute.

Despite the defeat, the 1998 German champions remain in contention for the title.

They dropped to sixth place but are only three points from Bayern.

"This was perhaps the most important match of the season for us," said Dortmund coach Matthias Sammer. "We played really well. This will boost our morale for the matches to come," he added.

A goal from Thomas Reis 15 minutes from time gave bottom club VfL Bochum a 1-0 win over 14th-placed Energie Cottbus.

It was the first win of 2001 for Bochum, who remain four points adrift.

Meanwhile, A well-taken goal from Peruvian Claudio Pizarro gave Werder their first victory over Bayern in Munich since 1992. He headed home a Paul Stalteri cross in the dying moments.

Pizarro had put the visitors in front from the penalty spot in the 25th minute after he was fouled by Bayern's Ghanaian defender Samuel Kuffour.

The hosts levelled two minutes into the second half through Brazilian Elber.

German international Marco Bode made it 2-1 for Werder from close range in the 58th minute after Bayern goalkeeper Oliver Kahn had failed to block a header from defender Frank Baumann.

Substitute Carsten Jancker equalised for the Bavarians with a delicate flick over Frank Rost in the 67th minute.

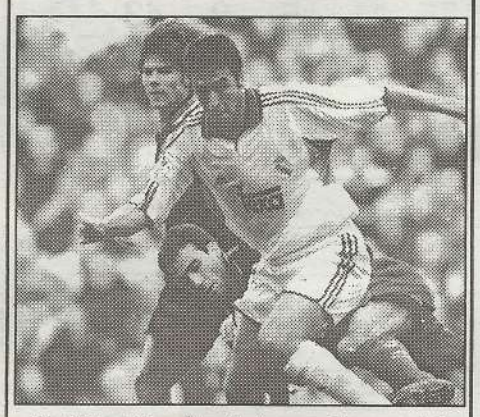
*Leverkusen's Jans Nowotny (left) vies with Schalke's Emile Mpenza.*

Kaiserslautern 1 Borussia Dortmund 4, VfL Bochum 1 Energie Cottbus 0, Hertha Berlin 3 TSV 1860 Munich 0, VfB Stuttgart 0 Cologne 3, Hamburg SV 1 SpVgg Unterhaching 1, SC Freiburg 5 Eintracht Frankfurt 2, Bayern Munich 2 Werder Bremen 3, Bayer Leverkusen 0 Schalke 04 3, VfL Wolfsburg 2 Hansa Rostock 1.

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Bayern Munich** | **27** | **15** | **4** | **8** | **53** | **31** | **49** |
| 2. Borussia Dortmund | 27 | 14 | 6 | 7 | 48 | 35 | 48 |
| 3. Schalke 04 | 27 | 13 | 7 | 7 | 46 | 26 | 46 |
| 4. Bayer Leverkusen | 27 | 14 | 4 | 9 | 46 | 33 | 46 |
| 5. Hertha Berlin | 27 | 15 | 1 | 11 | 50 | 44 | 46 |
| 6. Kaiserslautern | 27 | 14 | 4 | 9 | 40 | 37 | 46 |
| 7. Cologne | 27 | 11 | 7 | 9 | 47 | 39 | 40 |
| 8. Werder Bremen | 27 | 11 | 7 | 9 | 39 | 40 | 40 |
| 9. VfL Wolfsburg | 27 | 10 | 9 | 8 | 51 | 35 | 39 |
| 10. SC Freiburg | 27 | 10 | 9 | 8 | 38 | 31 | 39 |
| 11. Hansa Rostock | 27 | 10 | 4 | 13 | 28 | 39 | 34 |
| 12. 1860 Munich | 27 | 9 | 7 | 11 | 33 | 45 | 34 |
| 13. Hamburg SV | 27 | 9 | 6 | 12 | 50 | 49 | 33 |
| 14. E. Cottbus | 27 | 9 | 2 | 16 | 32 | 44 | 29 |
| 15. E. Frankfurt | 27 | 8 | 5 | 14 | 33 | 52 | 29 |
| 16. Unterhaching | 27 | 7 | 8 | 12 | 26 | 45 | 29 |
| 17. VfB Stuttgart | 27 | 6 | 9 | 12 | 35 | 43 | 27 |
| 18. VfL Bochum | 27 | 6 | 5 | 16 | 23 | 50 | 23 |

## PRIMERA LIGA

### FIGO RESCUE MADRID



*Madrid striker, Raul takes on Numancia's defenders.*

A Luis Figo free-kick on 28 minutes earned below-par Real Madrid a 1-0 win at home to Numancia on Saturday to keep the European champions five points clear in the Spanish league title race.

Real, who continue the defence of their Champions League crown with a quarter-final first leg away to Galatasaray on Tuesday, were well short of their best but secured victory on 28 minutes as Figo blasted in from the edge of the box.

Second-placed Deportivo Coruna, who face Leeds United in their Champions League quarter-final kept the pressure on Real with a 4-2 win at home to Las Palmas.

Djalminha put Depor ahead on 20 minutes and supplied the pass for Diego Tristan to double the lead just before halftime.

Victor pulled one back from the penalty spot in the second half before a second from Tristan and a Roy Makaay strike clinched the win, despite a late consolation from Javier Gracia.

Valencia, Spain's third representatives in the last eight of the Champions League, could not match Real and Deportivo as they went down 1-0 at home to Espanyol.

The defeat, which came via a Raul Tamudo strike seven minutes after the break, left Valencia 10 points off the title pace in third place and was a hefty blow to morale four days before their clash with Arsenal in London.

After 28 games, Real Madrid lead the standings with 59 points, followed by Deportivo on 54 and Valencia on 49.

Real, who take on Galatasaray in the last eight of the Champions League on Tuesday, were well below their best against a battling Numancia side, who had two great chances to equalise.

But coach Vicente del Bosque said he was satisfied to come away from the game with another three points and with their advantage over Deportivo intact.

"We had very little time to prepare for this match because of all the international games," said del Bosque. "Figo, for example, put in a tremendous effort in Portugal's game against the Netherlands.

"Maybe we didn't play with great movement but we were up against a team that played very well.

"We didn't play brilliantly but we did enough to win and I'm satisfied with that. These are three very important points."

Athletic Bilbao 0 Osasuna 1 Barcelona 4 Las Palmas 1 Racing Santander 2 Real Zaragoza 1 Real Mallorca 1 Real Sociedad 1 Real Oviedo 3 Alaves 3, Valladolid 1 Rayo Vallecano 3, Deportivo Coruna 4 Villarreal 2, Malaga 1 Celta Vigo 4, Real Madrid 1 Numancia 0, Valencia 0 Espanyol 1.

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Real Madrid** | **28** | **18** | **5** | **5** | **61** | **30** | **59** |
| 2. Deportivo Coruna | 28 | 16 | 6 | 6 | 56 | 33 | 54 |
| 3. Valencia | 28 | 14 | 7 | 7 | 43 | 22 | 49 |
| 4. Barcelona | 28 | 14 | 7 | 7 | 59 | 39 | 49 |
| 5. Real Mallorca | 28 | 12 | 10 | 6 | 38 | 34 | 46 |
| 6. Villarreal | 28 | 12 | 6 | 10 | 40 | 36 | 42 |
| 7. Celta Vigo | 28 | 11 | 8 | 9 | 39 | 39 | 41 |
| 8. Alaves | 28 | 11 | 7 | 10 | 42 | 37 | 40 |
| 9. Espanyol | 28 | 11 | 6 | 11 | 35 | 30 | 39 |
| 10. Malaga | 28 | 11 | 5 | 12 | 45 | 46 | 38 |
| 11. Rayo Vallecano | 28 | 9 | 10 | 9 | 48 | 47 | 37 |
| 12. Athletic Bilbao | 28 | 9 | 9 | 10 | 36 | 40 | 36 |
| 13. Las Palmas | 28 | 10 | 5 | 13 | 29 | 47 | 35 |
| 14. Real Zaragoza | 28 | 7 | 11 | 10 | 39 | 41 | 32 |
| 15. Valladolid | 28 | 7 | 11 | 10 | 31 | 35 | 32 |
| 16. Real Oviedo | 28 | 9 | 5 | 14 | 38 | 51 | 32 |
| 17. Osasuna | 28 | 6 | 9 | 13 | 31 | 43 | 27 |
| 18. Numancia | 28 | 7 | 6 | 15 | 27 | 47 | 27 |
| 19. Racing Santander | 28 | 7 | 5 | 16 | 34 | 48 | 26 |
| 20. Real Sociedad | 28 | 6 | 8 | 14 | 30 | 56 | 26 |

## WORLD LEAGUES

### BELGIAN FIRST DIVISION

Charleroi 2 Standard Liege 3, Beveren 0 La Louviere 1, Eendracht Aalst 1 Mechelen 3, Harelbeke 1 Genk 2, Westerlo 1 Germinal Beerschot 2, Sint-Truiden 1 Club Bruges 2, Lierse 2 Ghent 0, Antwerp 2 Lokeren 1. Anderlecht 3 Excelsior Mouscron 3.

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Anderlecht** | **27** | **20** | **6** | **1** | **73** | **24** | **66** |
| 2. Club Bruges | 27 | 18 | 8 | 1 | 69 | 21 | 62 |
| 3. Standard Liege | 27 | 14 | 9 | 4 | 64 | 33 | 51 |
| 4. Ghent | 27 | 3 | 7 | 7 | 48 | 38 | 46 |
| 5. Mouscron | 27 | 13 | 6 | 8 | 54 | 37 | 45 |
| 6. Germinal B'schot | 27 | 14 | 3 | 10 | 49 | 38 | 45 |
| 7. Lokeren | 27 | 12 | 7 | 8 | 40 | 34 | 43 |
| 8. Westerlo | 27 | 12 | 6 | 9 | 48 | 42 | 42 |
| 9. Lierse | 27 | 11 | 6 | 10 | 37 | 32 | 39 |
| 10. Charleroi | 27 | 11 | 4 | 12 | 42 | 49 | 37 |
| 11. Genk | 27 | 9 | 7 | 11 | 33 | 37 | 34 |
| 12. Antwerp | 27 | 9 | 4 | 14 | 31 | 39 | 31 |
| 13. Beveren | 27 | 8 | 7 | 12 | 24 | 50 | 31 |
| 14. Aalst | 27 | 6 | 6 | 15 | 27 | 56 | 24 |
| 15. La Louviere | 27 | 4 | 9 | 14 | 23 | 46 | 21 |
| 16. Harelbeke | 27 | 6 | 2 | 19 | 30 | 70 | 20 |
| 17. Mechelen | 27 | 4 | 7 | 16 | 34 | 59 | 19 |
| 18. Sint-Truiden | 27 | 4 | 6 | 17 | 25 | 46 | 18 |

### DUTCH FIRST DIVISION

NEC Nijmegen 1 Ajax Amsterdam 0, Groningen 0 Vitesse Arnhem 1, RKC Waalwijk 2 Feyenoord 0, Sparta Rotterdam 0 Utrecht 1, Heerenveen 2 RBC Roosendaal 0, NAC Breda 1 Fortuna Sittard 0, Willem II Tilburg 1 Roda JC Kerkrade 1, PSV Eindhoven 2 Twente Enschede 1, AZ Alkmaar 0 Graafschap Doetinchem 1.

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. PSV Eindhoven** | **26** | **19** | **6** | **1** | **56** | **16** | **63** |
| 2. Feyenoord | 26 | 18 | 2 | 6 | 54 | 25 | 56 |
| 3. Ajax Amsterdam | 26 | 15 | 5 | 5 | 69 | 31 | 50 |
| 4. Waalwijk | 26 | 13 | 8 | 5 | 36 | 22 | 47 |
| 5. Vitesse Arnhem | 26 | 13 | 7 | 6 | 45 | 36 | 46 |
| 6. Roda JC | 26 | 13 | 6 | 7 | 46 | 31 | 45 |
| 7. Utrecht | 25 | 11 | 5 | 9 | 41 | 39 | 38 |
| 8. Willem II | 26 | 10 | 8 | 8 | 46 | 38 | 38 |
| 9. NEC Nijmegen | 26 | 8 | 13 | 5 | 33 | 30 | 37 |
| 10. Heerenveen | 25 | 8 | 10 | 7 | 32 | 31 | 34 |
| 11. NAC Breda | 26 | 9 | 7 | 10 | 32 | 37 | 34 |
| 12. T. Enschede | 26 | 7 | 8 | 11 | 37 | 50 | 29 |
| 13. Groningen | 26 | 7 | 7 | 12 | 30 | 38 | 28 |
| 14. AZ Alkmaar | 26 | 7 | 6 | 13 | 35 | 51 | 27 |
| 15. S. Rotterdam | 26 | 5 | 5 | 16 | 35 | 57 | 20 |
| 16. Graafschap | 26 | 6 | 2 | 18 | 30 | 55 | 20 |
| 17. Fortuna Sittard | 26 | 4 | 6 | 16 | 18 | 49 | 18 |

### SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Aberdeen 0 Celtic 1, St Johnstone 2 Hibernian 0, Dundee 2 Kilmarnock 2, Hearts 3 Motherwell 0, Rangers 0 Dundee United 2, St Mirren 1 Dunfermline Athletic 1.

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Celtic** | **31** | **26** | **4** | **1** | **78** | **23** | **82** |
| 2. Rangers | 31 | 21 | 3 | 7 | 58 | 30 | 66 |
| 3. Hibernian | 32 | 17 | 9 | 6 | 52 | 25 | 60 |
| 4. Hearts | 32 | 13 | 7 | 12 | 51 | 43 | 46 |
| 5. Kilmarnock | 31 | 13 | 7 | 11 | 36 | 41 | 46 |
| 6. Dunfermline | 32 | 11 | 8 | 13 | 31 | 46 | 41 |
| 7. Dundee | 31 | 10 | 8 | 13 | 44 | 39 | 38 |
| 8. Motherwell | 32 | 10 | 6 | 16 | 36 | 48 | 36 |
| 9. St Johnstone | 32 | 8 | 11 | 13 | 35 | 47 | 35 |
| 10. Aberdeen | 31 | 7 | 12 | 12 | 33 | 45 | 33 |
| 11. Dundee Utd | 31 | 5 | 7 | 19 | 28 | 53 | 22 |
| 12. St Mirren | 32 | 5 | 4 | 23 | 21 | 63 | 19 |

### PORTUGUESE TOP SIX

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Boavista** | **26** | **16** | **8** | **2** | **47** | **15** | **56** |
| 2. Braga | 26 | 14 | 8 | 4 | 44 | 31 | 50 |
| 3. Sporting | 25 | 15 | 4 | 6 | 47 | 28 | 49 |
| 4. Porto | 25 | 15 | 4 | 6 | 49 | 23 | 49 |
| 5. Benfica | 26 | 13 | 6 | 7 | 43 | 29 | 45 |
| 6. Belenenses | 26 | 11 | 7 | 8 | 30 | 25 | 40 |

QANTAS
THE SPIRIT OF AUSTRALIA

## National Soccer League

| | TOTAL | | | | | | | HOME | | | | | | AWAY | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | P | W | D | L | F | A | PTS | P | W | D | L | F | A | P | W | D | L | F | A |
| **SOUTH MELBOURNE** | 25 | 17 | 5 | 3 | 50 | 18 | 56 | 12 | 10 | 2 | 0 | 29 | 6 | 13 | 7 | 3 | 3 | 21 | 12 |
| **SYDNEY OLYMPIC** | 25 | 16 | 4 | 5 | 48 | 27 | 52 | 12 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 25 | 10 | 12 | 7 | 2 | 4 | 23 | 17 |
| **PERTH GLORY** | 25 | 14 | 7 | 4 | 63 | 31 | 49 | 13 | 10 | 2 | 1 | 38 | 9 | 12 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 25 | 22 |
| **WOLLONGONG WOLVES** | 25 | 14 | 7 | 4 | 62 | 34 | 49 | 13 | 8 | 3 | 2 | 37 | 18 | 12 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 25 | 15 |
| **MELBOURNE KNIGHTS** | 25 | 12 | 5 | 8 | 51 | 40 | 41 | 12 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 24 | 16 | 13 | 6 | 2 | 5 | 27 | 24 |
| **MARCONI STALLIONS** | 25 | 11 | 7 | 7 | 36 | 30 | 40 | 13 | 7 | 3 | 3 | 24 | 17 | 12 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 12 | 12 |
| ADELAIDE CITY FORCE | 25 | 11 | 5 | 9 | 43 | 44 | 38 | 13 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 27 | 26 | 12 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 16 | 18 |
| SYDNEY UNITED | 25 | 10 | 6 | 9 | 37 | 44 | 36 | 12 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 18 | 17 | 13 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 19 | 30 |
| FOOTBALL KINGZ | 25 | 9 | 7 | 9 | 39 | 38 | 34 | 12 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 20 | 14 | 13 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 17 | 24 |
| PARRAMATTA POWER | 25 | 10 | 2 | 13 | 36 | 41 | 32 | 12 | 5 | 1 | 6 | 20 | 21 | 13 | 5 | 1 | 7 | 16 | 20 |
| BRISBANE STRIKERS | 25 | 8 | 6 | 11 | 44 | 47 | 30 | 12 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 30 | 18 | 13 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 13 | 29 |
| NORTHERN SPIRIT | 25 | 8 | 6 | 11 | 34 | 36 | 30 | 13 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 15 | 16 | 12 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 19 | 21 |
| CANBERRA COSMOS | 25 | 8 | 4 | 13 | 36 | 41 | 28 | 12 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 19 | 17 | 13 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 18 | 23 |
| NEWCASTLE UNITED | 25 | 5 | 8 | 12 | 25 | 47 | 23 | 13 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 10 | 20 | 12 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 15 | 24 |
| EASTERN PRIDE | 25 | 5 | 5 | 15 | 31 | 42 | 0* | 13 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 17 | 18 | 13 | 2 | 0 | 11 | 14 | 22 |

Matches played against Carlton will result in all teams being awarded a 3-0 win and 3 competition points

*All points deducted due to breach of NSL Regulations — subject to appeal

### ADELAIDE CITY FORCE 0
### MARCONI STALLIONS 0

**Venue:** Hindmarsh Stadium. **Crowd:** 3,896. **Referee:** S. Micaleff
**Cautions:** D. Longo (MS) 14, A. Costanzo (MS) 68, A. Kovacevic (AC) 90.

**Teams: ADELAIDE CITY FORCE:** Cagalj, Lagati, Kovacevic, Brain (Terminello 72), Veart, Vidmar, Hassell, Tunbridge (Budin 88), Rees, Pantelis, Pelosi.
**MARCONI STALLIONS:** Turnbull, M. Babic, Costanzo, Longo, Kim, Care (Zoric 68), Brownlie (Trajanowski 80), J. Gibson, Renaud, Thompson, Brodie (Afkos 88).

### NORTHERN SPIRIT 1
*(Howson 73)*
### MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 4
*(Vargas 20, Lapsansky 23, Marth 67, Porter 76)*

**Venue:** North Sydney Oval. **Crowd:** 3,119. **Referee:** P. Green.
**Cautions:** Foster (NS) 28, Cranney (NS) 29, Feeney (NS) 40.
**Red Card:** Feeney (NS) 45.
**Teams: NORTHERN SPIRIT:** Henderson, Cunico, Bingley, Thomas, Enes, Cranney, Burgess, Feeney, Griffiths (Watkins 59), Foster, Howson.
**MELBOURNE KNIGHTS:** Acevski, Vargas, Ognenovski, Nastevski, Porter, Kiratzoglou, Da Costa (Pelikan 88), Horvat (Vukadin 46), Marth, Jolic, Lapsansky (Rajtier 82).

## LEADING GOALSCORERS
*After Round Twenty-five*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **B. DESPOTOVSKI** | (Perth Glory) | 16 |
| **D. MORI** | (Perth Glory) | 16 |
| **B. BURGESS** | (Northern Spirit) | 14 |
| **S. PETROVSKI** | (W'gong Wolves) | 14 |
| **A. THOMPSON** | (Marconi/Carlton) | 12 |
| **S. CHIPPERFIELD** | (W'gong Wolves) | 12 |

### SYDNEY UNITED 1
*(Talevski 76)*
### WOLLONGONG WOLVES 1
*(Huxley 50)*

**Venue:** Sydney United SC. **Crowd:** 4,235. **Referee:** C. Diomis.
**Cautions:** Genc (SU) 53, Reid (WW) 77, Olic (SU) 84.

**Teams: SYDNEY UNITED:** Hughes, Olic, Plesa, Arrarte, Pondeljak, Maric (Burt 46), Deur, Genc (Rastall 79), Menapi, Awaritefe (Talevski 68).
**WOLLONGONG WOLVES:** Anastasiadis, Souris, Ceccoli, Horsley, Reid, Petrovski, Young, Huxley, Blake, Mennillo Middleby.

### SYDNEY OLYMPIC 3
*(Juric 54, Cardozo 72pen, Wilson 86)*
### CANBERRA COSMOS 1
*(Castro 40)*

**Venue:** Belmore Sports Ground. **Crowd:** 4,428. **Referee:** M. Shield.
**Cautions:** Marusic (SO) 22. **Red Card:** Marusic (SO) 48, Arranz (CC) 72.

**Teams: SYDNEY OLYMPIC:** Bolton, Baillie, Juric, Sinozic: Wilson, Collina, Goutzioulis (Parisi 46), Halpin (Owens 76), Packer (Augerinos 84), Cardozo, Marusic.
**CANBERA COSMOS:** Giannasca: Miyazawa, Hooker, Anthropoulos, Purdue (Ivanic 78), Aliffi, Kemp (Popovich 68), Prenzoski (Cortes 46), Arranz, Castro, Angelucci.

## Player Of The Week

DENNIS IBRAHIM: The Kingz ace striker bagged a hat-trick against the Brisbane Strikers.

### SOUTH MELBOURNE 1
*(Anastasiadis 69)*
### NEWCASTLE UNITED 0

**Venue:** Bob Jane Stadium. **Crowd:** 5,567. **Referee:** P. Mur.
**Cautions:** Trimboli (SM) 64, Wieczorek (NU) 64, Wilson (NU) 77.

**Teams: SOUTH MELBOURNE:** Petkovic, DeAmicis, Durakovic, Panopoulos, Coveny (Iosifidis 70), Trimboli, Boutsianis, Vlahos, Lozanovski (Anastasiadis 58), Kisborno, Colosimo.
**NEWCASTLE UNITED:** Catlin, McManus, Sprod (Jughniewicz 74), Dodd, Wilson, Buonavoglia, Tsekenis, Wieczorek, Trpcevski (Johnson 70), Masi, Harper.

### EASTERN PRIDE 2
*(Sekulovski 6, Ruca 39)*
### PARRAMATTA POWER 1
*(Bell 70 og)*

**Venue:** Mobil Park. **Crowd:** 763. **Referee:** C. Zetter.
**Cautions:** Buhagiar (EP), 13, Hutchinson (EP) 31, Clark (PP) 79.

**Teams: EASTERN PRIDE:** Galekovic, Fak, Gotis, Bell, Puca, Hutchinson (Deak 56), Sekulovski, Buhagiar (Katz 69), Wearne, Atkinson, Conroy.
**PARRAMATTA POWER:** Crews, Barrett, Elrich, Tobin, Miller, Brown, Blagojevic, Thompson (Clark 66), Santalab (Berry 55), Vrkic, Roodenburg (Reddy 38).

### FOOTBALL KINGZ 3
*(Ibrahim 28, 38, 43pen)*
### BRISBANE STRIKERS 2
*(Rech 23, Harris 52)*

**Venue:** Ericsson Stadium. **Crowd:** 4,891. **Referee:** D. Rugg.
**Cautions:** Bell (BS) 9, Baldock (BS) 43, Meredith (BS) 43, Srhoj (BS) 75, McLaren (BS) 85.

**Teams: FOOTBALL KINGZ:** Cuello, Lines (Urlovic 46), Perry (Osman 88), Jackson, Rufer (Bluhm 83), Davis, Ibrahim, Ngata, Cartwright, Douglas, Burton.
**BRISBANE STRIKERS:** Baldock, Dreger, Bell, Grierson, Srhoj, McLaren (Smeltz 90), Harris, Meredith (Webber 79), Rech, Hews (Foster 72), Buljan.

## ROUND 26

**WEDNESDAY APRIL 4**
South Melbourne ..... vs ..... Sydney United

**FRIDAY APRIL 6**
Parramatta Power ..... vs ..... Football Kingz

**SATURDAY APRIL 7**
Wollongong Wolves ..... vs ..... Sydney Olympic
Canberra Cosmos ..... vs ..... Eastern Pride
Marconi Stallions ..... vs ..... Perth Glory

**SUNDAY APRIL 8**
Brisbane Strikers ..... vs ..... Northern Spirit
Melbourne Knights ..... vs ..... Adelaide City Force

***Newcastle United - Bye***

## PERTH GLORY
## BYE